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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

TEMPORARY SYSTEMS IN EDUCATION

by



GERALD HCFKIRK

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and
recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research,
for acceptance, a thesis entitled
..... TEMPORARY SYSTEMS IN EDUCATION
.....
submitted by ..Gerald Hopkirk.....
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy.

To

Susan and Janice

ABSTRACT

The major purpose of the study was to examine a limited number of temporary systems with particular emphasis on their utility, both actual and potential, as an organizational arrangement in education. In order to accomplish this, a number of specific tasks were developed and pursued.

A questionnaire and interview guide, designed specifically for the study, were developed from the literature pertaining to temporary systems. Data obtained during the study were categorized using a conceptual framework devised by Steiner (1972). This conceptual framework included categories labelled task demands, resources, process, and productivity. These data were used to: (1) describe in detail five task forces with respect to specific characteristics attributed to temporary systems in the literature; (2) determine the perceived purpose for which each of the task forces in question was established; (3) determine the perceived effectiveness of each task force in achieving its purpose(s); (4) determine the perceived impact of the characteristics of temporary systems on the effectiveness of each task force, in particular, and on task forces, in general; and (5) examine the perceived direct and indirect effects of each task force on its membership. Respondents were members of five educational task forces which operated within Alberta since 1970.

In addition to providing a descriptive analysis of each task force, general characteristics of successful task forces were reported. These characteristics related to task orientation, time limits, nature of the task, decision making procedures, communication, group size, group atmosphere, status relationships, membership characteristics, satisfaction, adaptability, information sources, and dysfunctional aspects.

Generally the five task forces exhibited the characteristics predicted for temporary systems in the literature. With respect to utility, the task forces were found effective in achieving both their formal and informal purposes. Generally, respondents felt that the task force mode was the optimal organizational form for completion of their particular tasks. A well planned task force was found to be effective for accomplishing developmental tasks, solving nonroutine problems, managing organizational change, and enhancing professional growth.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| CHAPTER | | PAGE |
|---------|---|------|
| 1 | INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| | Purpose of the Study | 1 |
| | Specific Tasks | 1 |
| | FRAME OF REFERENCE | 2 |
| | SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY | 4 |
| | TEMPORARY SYSTEM: AN OPERATIONAL DEFINITION | 5 |
| | OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION | 5 |
| | SUMMARY | 7 |
| 2 | REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE | 9 |
| | OVERVIEW OF TEMPORARY SYSTEMS | 10 |
| | DEMANDS FOR TEMPORARY SYSTEMS | 18 |
| | Bureaucratization and Temporary Systems | 19 |
| | Adaptability and Temporary Systems | 22 |
| | Problem Solving and Temporary Systems | 24 |
| | Leadership and Temporary Systems | 25 |
| | Political Variables and Temporary Systems | 28 |
| | CHARACTERISTICS OF TEMPORARY SYSTEMS | 30 |
| | Task Demands | 32 |
| | Resources | 36 |
| | Process | 37 |
| | Productivity | 40 |
| | DYSFUNCTIONS OF TEMPORARY SYSTEMS | 42 |
| | SUMMARY | 50 |
| 3 | DESIGN OF THE STUDY | 52 |
| | THE MAJOR STUDY QUESTIONS | 52 |
| | Research Questions | 53 |
| | NATURE OF THE STUDY | 54 |
| | METHODOLOGY | 55 |
| | Sample Selection | 55 |
| | The Sample | 57 |
| | Instrumentation | 58 |
| | The Questionnaire | 59 |
| | The Interview | 61 |
| | The Pilot Study | 62 |
| | Validity | 63 |
| | Reliability | 64 |
| | Data Collection Techniques | 65 |
| | Data Presentation | 66 |
| | ASSUMPTIONS | 66 |
| | LIMITATIONS | 67 |

TABLE OF CONTENTS continued

| | | |
|---|-------------------------------|-----|
| | DELIMITATIONS | 67 |
| | SUMMARY | 68 |
| 4 | PPBES TASK FORCE | 69 |
| | BACKGROUND | 69 |
| | TASK DEMANDS | 72 |
| | Purposes | 72 |
| | Goal Acceptance | 76 |
| | Clarity of Guidelines | 77 |
| | Nature of Task | 77 |
| | Time Limits | 78 |
| | RESOURCES | 80 |
| | The Membership | 80 |
| | Information Access | 83 |
| | Funding | 86 |
| | PROCESS | 86 |
| | Decision Making | 86 |
| | Status Relationships | 87 |
| | Communication | 88 |
| | Energy Expenditure | 91 |
| | Dysfunctional Process | 91 |
| | Group Atmosphere | 93 |
| | PRODUCTIVITY | 93 |
| | Achievement of Purposes | 94 |
| | Satisfaction | 97 |
| | Personal Outcomes | 98 |
| | SUMMARY | 100 |
| 5 | JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL | |
| | MATHEMATICS CONSORTIUM | 106 |
| | BACKGROUND | 106 |
| | TASK DEMANDS | 108 |
| | Purposes | 108 |
| | Goal Acceptance | 113 |
| | Clarity of Guidelines | 113 |
| | Nature of Task | 115 |
| | Time Limits | 116 |
| | RESOURCES | 117 |
| | The Membership | 117 |
| | Information Access | 121 |
| | Funding | 121 |
| | PROCESS | 123 |
| | Decision Making | 123 |
| | Status Relationships | 123 |
| | Communication | 125 |
| | Energy Expenditure | 127 |
| | Dysfunctional Process | 127 |
| | Group Atmosphere | 128 |
| | PRODUCTIVITY | 129 |
| | Achievement of Purposes | 130 |
| | Satisfaction | 132 |

TABLE OF CONTENTS continued

| | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----|
| | Personal Outcomes | 133 |
| | SUMMARY | 135 |
| 6 | NORTHLAND STUDY GROUP | 140 |
| | BACKGROUND | 140 |
| | TASK DEMANDS | 142 |
| | Purposes | 142 |
| | Goal Acceptance | 146 |
| | Clarity of Guidelines | 146 |
| | Nature of Task | 147 |
| | Time Limits | 147 |
| | RESOURCES | 149 |
| | The Membership | 149 |
| | Information Access | 151 |
| | Funding | 152 |
| | PROCESS | 153 |
| | Decision Making | 154 |
| | Status Relationships | 154 |
| | Communication | 155 |
| | Energy Expenditure | 157 |
| | Dysfunctional Process | 158 |
| | Group Atmosphere | 158 |
| | PRODUCTIVITY | 160 |
| | Achievement of Purposes | 160 |
| | Satisfaction | 163 |
| | Personal Outcomes | 164 |
| | SUMMARY | 165 |
| 7 | ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION | |
| | TASK FORCE ON ACCREDITATION | 171 |
| | BACKGROUND | 171 |
| | TASK DEMANDS | 173 |
| | Purposes | 173 |
| | Goal Acceptance | 178 |
| | Clarity of Guidelines | 178 |
| | Nature of Task | 179 |
| | Time Limits | 180 |
| | RESOURCES | 181 |
| | The Membership | 181 |
| | Information Access | 184 |
| | Funding | 186 |
| | PROCESS | 186 |
| | Decision Making | 186 |
| | Status Relationships | 187 |
| | Communication | 188 |
| | Energy Expenditure | 189 |
| | Dysfunctional Process | 189 |
| | Group Atmosphere | 191 |
| | PRODUCTIVITY | 192 |
| | Achievement of Purposes | 192 |
| | Satisfaction | 194 |

TABLE OF CONTENTS continued

| | | |
|----|---|-----|
| | Personal Outcomes | 195 |
| | SUMMARY | 197 |
| 8 | COUNTY OF STRATHCONA | |
| | FRENCH PROJECT | 202 |
| | BACKGROUND | 202 |
| | TASK DEMANDS | 203 |
| | Purposes | 204 |
| | Goal Acceptance | 208 |
| | Clarity of Guidelines | 208 |
| | Nature of Task | 209 |
| | Time Limits | 210 |
| | RESOURCES | 211 |
| | The Membership | 211 |
| | Information Access | 214 |
| | Funding | 216 |
| | PROCESS | 216 |
| | Decision Making | 216 |
| | Status Relationships | 217 |
| | Communication | 218 |
| | Energy Expenditure | 220 |
| | Dysfunctional Process | 221 |
| | Group Atmosphere | 221 |
| | PRODUCTIVITY | 223 |
| | Achievement of Purposes | 223 |
| | Satisfaction | 225 |
| | Personal Outcomes | 226 |
| | SUMMARY | 228 |
| 9 | GENERALIZING CASE ANALYSIS | 233 |
| | GENERALIZING ANALYSIS | 234 |
| | Task Demands | 234 |
| | Resources | 239 |
| | Process | 243 |
| | Productivity | 250 |
| | IDEAL TASK FORCES | 253 |
| | PRESCRIPTIONS FOR AN EFFECTIVE TASK FORCE | 257 |
| | SUMMARY | 260 |
| 10 | SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, | |
| | IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS | 262 |
| | SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS | 262 |
| | Restatement of the Study Purpose | 262 |
| | Specific Tasks | 262 |
| | Review of Findings | 264 |
| | Summary - Chapter 4 | 264 |
| | Summary - Chapter 5 | 266 |
| | Summary - Chapter 6 | 269 |
| | Summary - Chapter 7 | 271 |
| | Summary - Chapter 8 | 272 |

TABLE OF CONTENTS continued

| | |
|--|-----|
| Summary and Conclusions - Chapter 9 | 274 |
| IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS | 277 |
| REFERENCES | 281 |
| APPENDIX A TEMPORARY SYSTEMS QUESTIONNAIRE | 291 |
| APPENDIX B TEMPORARY SYSTEMS INTERVIEW GUIDE | 307 |

LIST OF TABLES

| Table | Description | Page |
|-------|--|------|
| 4.1 | Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Importance of a Number of Purposes With Respect to the PPBES Task Force. | 73 |
| 4.2 | Respondents' Perceptions of Goal Acceptance by PPBES Task Force Members. | 77 |
| 4.3 | Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Nature of the Guidelines for the PPBES Task Force. | 78 |
| 4.4 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Types of Tasks or Problems Dealt With by the PPBES Task Force. | 79 |
| 4.5 | Respondents' Awareness of PPBES Task Force Time Limits. | 79 |
| 4.6 | Respondents' Perceptions of PPBES Task Force Members' Task Orientation. | 82 |
| 4.7 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Adaptability and Flexibility of the PPBES Task Force. | 83 |
| 4.8 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Establishment of Leadership in the PPBES Task Force. | 83 |
| 4.9 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Amounts and Sources of Information Available to the PPBES Task Force. | 85 |
| 4.10 | Respondents' Perceptions of Decision Making Strategies within the PPBES Task Force. | 88 |
| 4.11 | Respondents' Perceptions of Status Relationships, Emerging Leadership, and Noticeable Hierarchy Within the PPBES Task Force. | 89 |
| 4.12 | Respondents' Perceptions of Energy Expenditure within the PPBES Task Force. | 92 |
| 4.13 | Respondents' Perceptions of Unrealistic Goal Setting within the PPBES Task Force. | 92 |
| 4.14 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Group Atmosphere within the PPBES Task Force. | 94 |

LIST OF TABLES continued

| | | |
|------|--|-----|
| 4.15 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Degree of Achievement of Important Purposes of the PPBES Task Force. | 96 |
| 4.16 | Respondents' Satisfaction within Task Force and in Regular Work Situation. | 98 |
| 4.17 | Respondents' Concern Over Job Security. | 99 |
| 5.1 | Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Importance of a Number of Purposes With Respect to the Consortium Executive. | 109 |
| 5.2 | Respondents' Perceptions of Goal Acceptance by Consortium Executive Members. | 114 |
| 5.3 | Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Nature of the Guidelines for the Consortium Executive. | 114 |
| 5.4 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Types of Tasks or Problems Dealt With by the Consortium Executive. | 115 |
| 5.5 | Respondents' Awareness of Consortium Executive Time Limits. | 116 |
| 5.6 | Respondents' Perceptions of Consortium Executive Members' Task Orientation. | 119 |
| 5.7 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Adaptability and Flexibility of the Consortium Executive. | 120 |
| 5.8 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Establishment of Leadership in the Consortium Executive. | 120 |
| 5.9 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Amounts and Sources of Information Available to the Consortium Executive. | 122 |
| 5.10 | Respondents' Perceptions of Decision Making Strategies within the Consortium Executive. | 124 |
| 5.11 | Respondents' Perceptions of Status Relationships, Emerging Leadership, and Noticeable Hierarchy within the Consortium Executive. | 125 |
| 5.12 | Respondents' Perceptions of Energy Expenditure within the Consortium Executive. | 127 |
| 5.13 | Respondents' Perceptions of Unrealistic Goal Setting within the Consortium Executive. | 128 |

LIST OF TABLES continued

| | | |
|------|---|-----|
| 5.14 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Group Atmosphere within the Consortium Executive. | 129 |
| 5.15 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Degree of Achievement of Important Purposes of the Consortium Executive. | 131 |
| 5.16 | Respondents' Satisfaction within Task Force and in Regular Work Situation. | 133 |
| 5.17 | Respondents' Concern Over Job Security. | 134 |
| 6.1 | Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Importance of a Number of Purposes With Respect to the Study Group. | 143 |
| 6.2 | Respondents' Perceptions of Goal Acceptance by Study Group Members. | 146 |
| 6.3 | Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Nature of the Guidelines for the Study Group. | 147 |
| 6.4 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Types of Tasks or Problems Dealt With by the Study Group. | 148 |
| 6.5 | Respondents' Awareness of Study Group Time Limits. | 148 |
| 6.6 | Respondents' Perceptions of Study Group Members' Task Orientation. | 150 |
| 6.7 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Adaptability and Flexibility of the Study Group. | 151 |
| 6.8 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Establishment of Leadership in the Study Group. | 152 |
| 6.9 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Amounts and Sources of Information Available to the Study Group. | 153 |
| 6.10 | Respondents' Perceptions of Decision Making Strategies within the Study Group. | 155 |
| 6.11 | Respondents' Perceptions of Status Relationships, Emerging Leadership, and Noticeable Hierarchy within the Study Group. | 156 |
| 6.12 | Respondents' Perceptions of Energy Expenditure within the Study Group. | 157 |
| 6.13 | Respondents' Perceptions of Unrealistic Goal Setting within the Study Group. | 158 |

LIST OF TABLES continued

| | | |
|------|--|-----|
| 6.14 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Group Atmosphere within the Study Group. | 159 |
| 6.15 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Degree of Achievement of Important Purposes of the Study Group. | 162 |
| 6.16 | Respondents' Satisfaction Within Task Force and in Regular Work Situation. | 164 |
| 6.17 | Respondents' Concern Over Job Security. | 165 |
| 7.1 | Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Importance of a Number of Purposes With Respect to the Accreditation Task Force. | 174 |
| 7.2 | Respondents' Perceptions of Goal Acceptance by Accreditation Task Force Members. | 178 |
| 7.3 | Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Nature of the Guidelines for the Accreditation Task Force. | 179 |
| 7.4 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Types of Tasks or Problems Dealt With by the Accreditation Task Force. | 180 |
| 7.5 | Respondents' Awareness of Accreditation Task Force Time Limits. | 181 |
| 7.6 | Respondents' Perceptions of Accreditation Task Force Members' Task Orientation. | 183 |
| 7.7 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Adaptability and Flexibility of the Accreditation Task Force. | 183 |
| 7.8 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Establishment of Leadership in the Accreditation Task Force. | 184 |
| 7.9 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Amounts and Sources of Information Available to the Accreditation Task Force. | 185 |
| 7.10 | Respondents' Perceptions of Decision Making Strategies within the Accreditation Task Force. | 187 |
| 7.11 | Respondents' Perceptions of Status Relationships, Emerging Leadership, and Noticeable Hierarchy within the Accreditation Task Force. | 188 |
| 7.12 | Respondents' Perceptions of Energy Expenditure within the Accreditation Task Force. | 190 |

LIST OF TABLES continued

| | | |
|------|--|-----|
| 7.13 | Respondents' Perceptions of Unrealistic Goal Setting within the Accreditation Task Force. | 190 |
| 7.14 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Group Atmosphere within the Accreditation Task Force. | 191 |
| 7.15 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Degree of Achievement of Important Purposes of the Accreditation Task Force. | 193 |
| 7.16 | Respondents' Satisfaction within Task Force and in Regular Work Situation. | 196 |
| 7.17 | Respondents' Concern Over Job Security. | 197 |
| 8.1 | Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Importance of a Number of Purposes With Respect to the Steering Committee. | 205 |
| 8.2 | Respondents' Perceptions of Goal Acceptance by Steering Committee Members. | 208 |
| 8.3 | Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Nature of the Guidelines for the Steering Committee. | 209 |
| 8.4 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Types of Tasks or Problems Dealt With by the Steering Committee. | 210 |
| 8.5 | Respondents' Awareness of Steering Committee Time Limits. | 211 |
| 8.6 | Respondents' Perceptions of Steering Committee Members' Task Orientation. | 213 |
| 8.7 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Adaptability and Flexibility of the Steering Committee. | 213 |
| 8.8 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Establishment of Leadership in the Steering Committee. | 214 |
| 8.9 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Amounts and Sources of Information Available to the Steering Committee. | 215 |
| 8.10 | Respondents' Perceptions of Decision Making Strategies within the Steering Committee. | 217 |
| 8.11 | Respondents' Perceptions of Status Relationships, Emerging Leadership, and Noticeable Hierarchy within the Steering Committee. | 218 |

LIST OF TABLES continued

| | | |
|------|--|-----|
| 8.12 | Respondents' Perceptions of Energy Expenditure within the Steering Committee. | 220 |
| 8.13 | Respondents' Perceptions of Unrealistic Goal Setting within the Steering Committee. | 221 |
| 8.14 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Group Atmosphere within the Steering Committee. | 222 |
| 8.15 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Degree of Achievement of Important Purposes of the Steering Committee. | 224 |
| 8.16 | Respondents' Satisfaction within Task Force and in Regular Work Situation. | 227 |
| 8.17 | Respondents' Concern Over Job Security. | 228 |
| 9.1 | Respondents' Perceptions of the Importance of Various Characteristics in Ideal Task Forces. | 255 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| Figure | | Page |
|--------|--|------|
| 1 | Two Types of Organizational Structure. | 14 |
| 2 | Relationship Between Type of Problem and Type of Organization. | 14 |

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine a limited number of temporary systems with particular emphasis on their utility, both actual and potential, as an organizational arrangement in education.

Specific Tasks

To fulfil the study purpose it was necessary to complete the following specific tasks:

1. describe in detail five task forces with respect to specific characteristics attributed to temporary systems in the literature;

2. determine the perceived purpose for which each of the temporary systems in question was established;

3. determine the perceived effectiveness of each temporary system in achieving its purpose(s);

4. determine the perceived impact of the characteristics described as a result of task 1 (above), on the effectiveness of the particular task force and on task forces, in general;

5. examine the perceived direct and indirect effects of each task force on its membership.

FRAME OF REFERENCE

Frame of reference means "...a set of basic assumptions necessary to determine the subject matter to be studied and the orientation toward such study" (Holzner 1964:275). It is in this sense that "frame of reference" is used as the title for this portion of the dissertation.

It is assumed that administrators, in schools and school systems, are concerned with growth and development. Specifically, Walker (1975:288) claims:

Educational administration in schools and school systems is primarily concerned with individual children. Any policy, practice, or procedure which cannot be seen as contributing to the growth, development, and welfare of the individual child is indefensible.

Beyond this, educational administration is also concerned with contributing to "...the growth and development of the other key human links in the educative process- the parent and the teacher" (Walker 1975:288).

Development and growth are concepts which imply a concern for the future. When attempting to meet the needs of individuals, one must be concerned not only with "what is" but also with "what might be." Shane (1973), Toffler (1971), and other futurists tend to agree on at least one thing - if individuals, schools, and school systems are to survive and cope adequately in the future they must be adaptable.

The importance of adaptability in and by organizations is, of course, not limited to the perceptions of the futurists. Adaptability/flexibility is the most common

measure of organizational effectiveness used in administrative research (Steers 1975). If the future is perceived as an important concern for education, then one is compelled to search for alternative organizational forms which lead to adaptability.

One body of literature, that which pertains to temporary systems, appears to be closely related to this concern. The nature of various forms of temporary systems is developmental and adaptable. In the literature temporary systems within organizations are seen as having certain advantages for particular settings and problems. The literature suggests that temporary systems are adaptive (Miles 1964, Bogue 1971), growth enhancing (Bryce 1973), conducive to high achievement (deGrazia 1961), participative (Bryce 1973, Miles 1964), flexible (Bogue 1971), enjoyable (Bryce 1973), re-educative (Miles 1964), satisfying (Bennis 1966), creative (Zand 1974), and rapid processing (Zand 1974). These aspects of temporary systems have considerable importance for educational administration. Also, Lonsdale and Ohm (1971:111) claim that the team concept of administration will become increasingly prevalent. Teams will be put together to deal with specific functions and problems. Many of these teams will be ad hoc and temporary, with team membership changing as tasks are accomplished and problems solved. More definitive is the claim by Bennis (1966:12) that:

Adaptive, temporary systems of diverse

specialists, solving problems, linked together by coordinating and task- evaluative specialists in organic flux, will gradually replace bureaucracy as we know it.

Indeed, in educational settings we have witnessed the increased use of task forces, ad hoc committees, and project teams. This fact, coupled with educators' concern with developmental, future oriented goals makes "temporary systems" a suitable concept to examine with respect to its current utility and its potential for the future.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In addition to the implied general significance in the preceding Frame of Reference, the study is significant for a number of reasons:

1. The study provides insights into temporary systems and suggestions for further research are outlined.

2. The study has implications for the training of educational administrators, particularly in the area of personnel management.

3. The instrumentation developed for the study provides a means to evaluate other temporary systems.

4. The study provides data which will help make rational policy decisions with respect to the use of temporary systems.

5. The study provides a baseline measure of the conditions under which a temporary system appears effective.

6. The study lays the groundwork for a contingent typology of temporary systems.

TEMPORARY SYSTEM: AN OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

Rather than superficially examining all types of temporary systems in education the study was delimited in that five temporary systems of a similar type were investigated. The five temporary systems were of a task force nature.

For the purposes of the study a temporary system (task force) was defined as an organizational form designed to complete a task, solve a problem, or bring about a condition. The system from its inception was known to be of limited duration and the criteria for dissolution were known to the membership. A pure temporary system was one in which the system ceased to exist for all members within the temporary system at the same time and all members were working only within the temporary system during its existence. A collateral temporary system was one which co-existed with a formal organization. Members worked in the formal organization on a regular basis but were seconded to work in the temporary system on a part-time basis.

OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

In Chapter 1 an introduction to the study was presented. The introduction includes a statement of the study purpose and the specific tasks related to that purpose. A frame of reference for the study was then provided.

The significance of the study and an operational definition of temporary system were also presented in

Chapter 1, along with an outline of the dissertation.

Presented in Chapter 2 is a review of the literature which impinges directly on the study purpose and tasks. The review is presented in four sections.

The initial section provides an overview of the temporary systems concept. Definitions of temporary systems are presented along with the general functions of such systems. One type of temporary system, Zand's (1974) collateral organization, is discussed in some detail.

The second section examines the demands for temporary systems that exist in the literature. Demands for temporary systems are examined as they relate to bureaucratization, adaptability, decision making and problem solving, leadership, and, finally, political process.

The third section contains a review of the characteristics of temporary systems. These characteristics are classified using a conceptual framework developed by Steiner (1972). The framework includes four categories, namely, task demands, resources, process, and productivity.

The final section presents a review of major dysfunctions, both actual and potential, attributed to temporary systems in the literature.

The research design is presented in Chapter 3. The major research questions are presented as they developed from the study purpose and tasks.

The nature of the study is discussed and support for case analysis as a suitable method for exploratory research

is cited.

Methodology is discussed under the headings of sample selection, instrumentation, pilot study, validity, reliability, data collection techniques, and data presentation.

Examined in the final sections of the chapter are the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations under which the study was conducted.

In Chapters 5 to 8 inclusive are contained descriptive analyses of five temporary systems. These are the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Evaluation System Task Force, Northland Study Group, Junior High Mathematics Consortium, Strathcona French Project, and The Alberta Teachers' Association Task Force on Accreditation.

Chapter 9 contains a generalizing analysis of the data relating to the five task forces. In a second section of the chapter, data relating to respondents' perceptions of effective task forces are presented and analysed. The final section contains a prescriptive list of the characteristics of effective task forces.

Chapter 10 contains a summary of the findings, as well as conclusions, implications, and recommendations emanating from the study.

SUMMARY

In this chapter an introduction to the study was presented. The introduction included a statement of the study purpose and the specific tasks related to that

purpose. A frame of reference for the study was then provided.

The significance of the study and an operational definition of temporary systems were also presented in Chapter 1 along with an outline of the dissertation.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In Chapter 1, an introduction to the study was presented including the study purpose and the specific tasks necessary for the fulfilment of the purpose. A frame of reference was presented and the significance of the study discussed. Included, also, in the first chapter was an explanation of terms and an outline of the remainder of the study. The purpose of the study was to examine a limited number of temporary systems with particular emphasis on their utility, both actual and potential, as an organizational arrangement in education.

This chapter presents a review of the literature that is directly related to the study purpose and tasks. The review is presented in four sections. In the initial section is provided an overview of the concept of temporary systems, while in the second section are reviewed the demands for temporary systems. In the third section are discussed the organizational characteristics of temporary systems. This latter section is subdivided into the four areas of resources, task demands, process, and productivity (Steiner 1972). The final section of the chapter contains a review of the dysfunctions of temporary systems. A summary of the literature review provides the conclusion for the chapter.

OVERVIEW OF TEMPORARY SYSTEMS

Goodman and Goodman (1976:494) define a temporary system as a set of diversely skilled people working together on a complex task over a limited period of time. Temporary systems are seen as inevitable entities within and among our organizations of the future. This inevitability, according to Bennis and Slater (1968:2), stems from the fact that democracy "...is the only system that can successfully cope with the changing demands of contemporary society." The democracy spoken of here is a system of values that are singularly compatible with the concept of temporary systems. According to Bennis and Slater (1968:4) this system of values includes full and free communication, consensus management, influence based on technical competence and knowledge, an atmosphere encouraging emotional expression as well as task-oriented acts, and rational conflict management. The compatibility of these values with the norms of temporary systems makes the latter a central theme of much of Bennis' writing. The flexible, temporary organization is presented as the ultimate solution for the contingencies of the future. Bennis and Slater (1968:11) claim:

The trend toward the organization man is also a trend toward a looser and more flexible organization in which roles are to some extent interchangeable and no one is indispensable.

They further state:

Where it is too late to slow down the pace of temporary societies, it is not too late (and it

becomes necessary) to examine ways that may be more adaptive in coping with temporary systems, ways that could both realize our full human potentialities and extract whatever benefits modernization can bring.

(Bennis and Slater, 1968:125)

It is this "temporary society" that will give rise to demands for an educational system that recognizes contingency and thus temporary systems as inevitable.

Miles (1964) has developed the most comprehensive model of temporary systems and has, thus, provided the theoretical basis for much of the literature in the area. According to Miles (1964:437-8) temporary structures:

...operate both within permanent organizations and between them; their members hold from the start the basic assumption that - at some more or less clearly defined point in time - they will cease to be.

Schein (1970:82) concurs with Miles but suggests that temporary groups often take on some other task or informal function. He claims:

Temporary formal groups may exist for a long time. What makes them temporary is that they are defined as such by the organization and that the members feel themselves to be a part of a group which may at any time go out of existence.

Conferences, games, juries, love affairs, and project teams provide examples of temporary structures (systems). These systems are temporary for all their members. Other systems may have a permanent structure but are temporary for the client. Schools and prisons are examples of this impure form of temporary system.

Miles (1964:440) asserts that the key defining concept

in a temporary system is its anticipated duration. Termination of a temporary structure or system is usually chronological or time-linked, event-linked or state (condition)- linked. Miles (1964:441) claims that "...temporary system phenomena will be the strongest in the pure case," that is, where all members leave the system at the same, prespecified time. Three global functions are attached to temporary systems. Firstly, they can be used to maintain a person, group, or organization in the surrounding social system.

That is, such systems serve the function usually assigned to informal organization: that of absorbing, counteracting, and making up for the malformations caused by the formal organization, as well as enabling spontaneous, rich participation of the person in areas of his life seen as largely irrelevant to "work" (Miles 1964:442).

A second function of temporary systems is the accomplishment of particular tasks. They are spun off the permanent system from which their members are drawn and all energies "...can be directed singlemindedly toward the defined task" (Miles 1964:443). Zand's (1974) collateral organization relates to this type of temporary system. He recognizes the importance of structural change as a method of problem solving. Zand (1974) contends that attempts to replace existing hierarchical organizations with free-form organizations involving humanistic values has had unfortunate consequences.

Indeed the idea of totally displacing existing systems may well have diverted managers into

choosing sides, and thereby seriously interfered with their learning to improve their organization's adaptability and effectiveness (Zand 1974:64).

In an effort to redirect the efforts of administrators, Zand suggests what could be termed a "contingency approach" (Fiedler 1967, Lawrence and Lorsch 1967, Dessler 1976). Zand (1974:64) recommends the use of "...the strategy of collateral organization as a means of increasing flexibility." A collateral organization is defined as "...a parallel, continuously coexisting organization which a manager can use to supplement his or her co-existing formal organization." (Zand 1974:63)

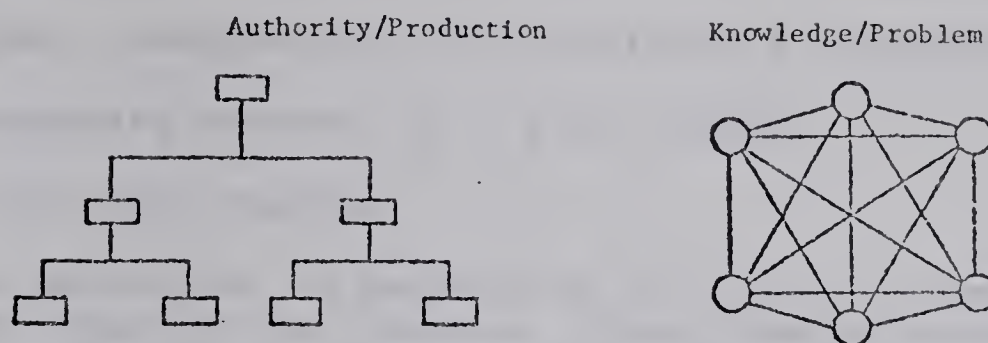
To illustrate the use of collateral organizations one must classify organizations into two categories - Authority/Production, and Knowledge/Problem, the latter being collateral in nature. (See Figures 1 and 2, on the following page.)

In Figure 2, one can see the type of organization which is most effective, contingent upon the type of problem to be solved. Cell III is appropriate for managerial use of a collateral organization in developing solutions. Perrow (1970), Woodward (1965), and Argyris (1964) concur with this stand. Argyris (1964:211), for example, asserts that "...organizations (of the future) will tend to vary the structures that they use according to the kinds of decisions that must be made."

Some task forces can operate as a collateral

Figure 1

Two Types of Organizational Structure

Elements

| | | |
|--|---------------------------|---|
| 1. Levels of authority | Many | Few |
| 2. Division of labor | High | Low |
| 3. Links to others in the organization | Few | Many |
| 4. Source of influence and power | Position in the hierarchy | Ability to identify and solve the problem |
| 5. Use of rules and procedures | High | Low |
| 6. Primary purpose | Maximize output | Analyze or invent knowledge to solve problems |

Figure 2

Relationship Between Type of Problem and Type of Organization

| TYPE OF PROBLEM | TYPE OF ORGANIZATION | |
|-----------------|---|--|
| | Authority/Production | Knowledge/Problem |
| Well-Structured | I High output Rapid processing Small number of errors in output Members low in authority report low satisfaction Tends to reject unsolicited innovations | II Lower output Slower processing More errors in output More satisfying 'Accepts unsolicited innovations |
| | IV Lower output Slower processing Low-quality solutions Low in creativity Orderly, but not functional | III High output Rapid processing High-quality solutions High creativity Appears disorderly but is functional |

organization, however, this will not be the case if they are "...spun off by conventional hierarchies and operate in the same authority/production mode as the primary organization" (Zand 1974:86). Termination of a collateral organization, like any temporary system, is a key concept.

Zand (1974:86) states:

A collateral organization is likely to terminate for one of two reasons. First, the ill-structured problems it is intended to solve are solved and there are no more. Second, the permanent, primary organization has internalized the norms and the competence of the collateral organization.

The collateral mode, as described, would seem compatible with the types of problems often faced by the public school system. It would allow ill-structured problems to be tackled in a mode different from the day-to-day functioning of a school which traditionally uses a bureaucratic mode exclusively.

Its compatibility with the teaching process makes it attractive to education. It is difficult to classify teachers or administrators as professional educators or technicians. The obvious answer is that they are both - depending upon the type of problem to be solved. The concept of collateral organization would seem appropriate in maximizing administrator effectiveness in performing what appears to be a dual role.

The collateral mode relates to change and organization development in that it requires administrators to look not simply at a global typology of an organization, i.e.,

bureaucratic, but rather at various modes contingent upon the nature of the problem to be solved.

In summary, Zand (1974:88) states:

After using a collateral mode, the manager and his subordinates learn that the hierarchical organization can continue. Disorder does not take over. Directive behavior can still be used, but there is better understanding of how to integrate participation and group effort with the formal organization through use of a collateral mode. Perhaps most important, organization members learn concepts and methods which enable them to freely invent and use new modes for solving ill-structured problems.

Using a similar argument, Goodman and Goodman (1976:495) suggest that temporary systems are usually created in response to four problems. These problems are:

1. The task is complex with respect to interdependence of detailed task accomplishment, so that it is not easy to define tasks clearly.
2. The task is almost unique, so that there are no regularly specified procedures for coping with it in the permanent organization.
3. The task is usually of critical or significant importance to the organization, which accounts for the willingness to create a new structure to deal with it.
4. The task is defined in terms of specific goals, thus setting a time limit to the task, so that the permanent organization will know when the task is completed.

A third function of temporary systems is the induction of change. Miles (1964:443) claims that "...permanent systems - whether persons, groups, or organizations - find it difficult to change themselves." The major portion of available energy goes into (1) carrying out routine, goal-

directed operations and (2) maintenance of existing relationships within the system. Victor Thompson (1961:61) concurs: a hierarchical system always favours the status quo." Support is also found in Bennis (1966), Bennis and Slater (1968), Toffler (1970), and Bogue (1971).

Miles (1964) considers three types of change related to temporary systems. These are treatment systems, which are concerned with correcting deviant behavior; re-educative systems, which require an un-learning or corrective phase prior to the re-learning phase; and educative systems, which are designed to add new knowledge.

Bogue (1971:95) offers a simpler taxonomy of the characteristics of temporary systems. He terms them disposable organizations. His essential characteristics follow. Disposable organizations:

1. are problem or issue-centered rather than function-centered structures;

2. have a built-in, self-destruct mechanism which is activated upon resolution;

3. will be staffed so that the authority of competence replaces the authority of position and role;

4. will offer "short-circuit" channels of communication rather than the carefully contained vertical patterns of hierarchy.

The concepts highlighted in this section provide an overview of temporary systems. Particular characteristics of various types of temporary systems are examined in

subsequent sections of the literature review.

Temporary systems have evolved and continue to evolve as a result of certain demands placed on individuals, organizations, and societies. It is these demands that are examined in the following section.

DEMANDS FOR TEMPORARY SYSTEMS

The demands for temporary systems are widespread and, in some cases, complex. Following the presentation of some general demands gleaned from the literature, this section examines the potential uses for temporary systems as they relate to bureaucratization, adaptability, decision-making and problem solving, leadership, and, finally, political process.

Bennis (1976:88) is quite candid in his petition for temporary systems:

We have an awesome capacity to perpetuate things long after their reason for existence has passed. Which is why I believe in built-in rules of destruction for some situations.

His concern is that we must develop an organization that sees reality, but that is not faddish, and operates without becoming too rigid. He feels institutions need "reflective structures" that take the time to seriously examine their own operations. Reflective structures set up on democratic values will become a functional necessity "...whenever a social system is competing for survival under conditions of chronic change." (Bennis and Slater 1968:4)

Not only are the preceding demands apparent but the

current climate appears receptive to the type of change called for. Porter et al. (1975:519) assert:

...society at large and the general cultural milieu seem more supportive of experiments in organizational forms and practices. The seemingly strong positive values attached to such concepts as "innovation" and "change" (especially if labeled "imaginative change") are likely to encourage managers and leaders of organizations to depart from past ways of doing things in organizations and at least try out new ideas and methods.

These trends should allow various forms of temporary systems to be utilized within and among our organizations.

Bureaucratization and Temporary Systems

Many of the characteristics of pure Weberian bureaucracy are seen as dysfunctional by human resource writers, e.g., Likert 1961, 1967, Argyris 1964, McGregor 1960. Characteristics such as a defined chain of command, procedures and rules, division of labor, impersonality, life tenure, and fixed distribution of authority (Weber, 1947) often appear contradictory to the temporary systems concept. Bennis and Slater (1968:55) claim that this incompatibility actually signals the downfall of bureaucracy. They state there are at least four relevant threats to bureaucracy:

1. rapid and unexpected change;
2. growth in size where the volume of the organization's traditional activities is not enough to sustain growth...;
3. complexity of modern technology...;
4. a basically psychological threat springing from a

change in managerial behavior.

According to Bennis (1976:107-8) people in bureaucracies practise a terrible oversimplification process.

There is no time for them to see things in a complex, differentiated, dialectical way. This helps them keep their distance; by reducing men and women to stereotypes they eliminate the need to learn from them.

These problems associated with bureaucracy are of direct relevance to educational organizations of the future. Briner and Sroufe (1971:88) see the need for educational organizations to replace rigid hierarchical forms with more fluid structures in order to "...achieve the capacity to sense and respond that will characterize education." The structure will be always in a "...state of flux or potential flux." Briner and Sroufe (1971:87) do accept that some formal structure is necessary which is not recognized at all by Toffler (1970) and only minimally by Bennis and Slater (1968). The latter accept that an autocratic centralized structure is suitable for simple tasks under static conditions, but for very little else. The stability and security offered to individuals in a formal organizational setting appears neglected by these writers. More recently, however, Bennis (1976:108), writing from the pragmatic setting of a college president's chair, claims:

I have chosen, for my own principal assistants, people who have faculty tenure - for the simple reason that, since they have something to go back to if either of us doesn't like the relationship or find its results satisfactory, they are much freer to be outspoken and to try and give me the objective truth.

The hierarchy and its implication for studies of organizations now, or in the future, should not be neglected. Tannenbaum et al. (1974:6) suggest that "...in one form or another hierarchy remains, and it is likely to remain a manifest and important element of organizational structure."

Most of the preceding writers do suggest that societal changes caused by the scientific and technological revolution compel us to search for newer models of organization that can cope with contemporary conditions. For example, Toffler (1970:135) predicts the demise of bureaucracy to be replaced by what he terms "ad hococracy." He states:

Traditional functional organization structures, created to meet predictable non novel conditions, prove incapable of responding effectively to radical changes in the environment.

He claims that, as a result, we now see permanently-structured large organizations infiltrated with transient cells.

From another perspective Bogue (1971:94) also states that the demand for temporary systems stems from the limitations of contemporary structures. He claims contemporary structures: (1) do not encourage a "systems" view of the environment, (2) reduce the opportunity for individuals to achieve self-actualization, (3) reduce the opportunity for change, and, finally, (4) encourage a mechanistic view of organizational functions.

One of the key deficiencies of the bureaucratic mode that appears throughout the literature on temporary systems is the lack of adaptability. This is the theme of the following section.

Adaptability and Temporary Systems

Since change has now become a permanent and accelerating factor in American life, adaptability to change becomes increasingly the most important single determinant of survival (Bennis and Slater 1968:4).

This concern for adaptability is expressed by many of the future oriented writers (Toffler 1970, Bennis 1966, Schein 1970, Shane 1973, Porter et al. 1975). Aside from the futurists, organizational theorists have for some time been aware of the importance of adaptability as a key ingredient of successful organizations. Adaptability and flexibility are common indicators of effectiveness (Mott 1972:ix) in the literature and are key influences on organizational output (Immegart and Pilecki 1973). Steers (1975), in a review of 17 multivariate models of organizational effectiveness, in terms of their primary evaluation criteria, found "adaptability-flexibility" to be the most common of these criteria. Mott (1972:20) sees flexibility as different conceptually from adaptability "...because the organizational changes that result from meeting emergencies are usually temporary...adaptive changes are more likely to be permanent." However, in discussing temporary systems the two concepts become synonymous.

A definition of effectiveness supported by another

cadre, the organization development theorists, i.e., Argyris 1962, Beckhard 1969, Blake and Mouton 1969, Grenier and Barnes 1970, is that given by Schein (1970:118): "...a system's effectiveness can be defined as its capacity to survive, adapt, maintain itself, and grow, regardless of the function it fulfils." This definition is almost at total odds with the temporary systems concept but does illustrate the extent to which "adaptability" exists in almost all the organizational literature. Virtually all models of organization development assume that adaptability-flexibility is a measure, in some cases the only measure, of effectiveness.

When speaking of adaptability in relation to temporary systems the meaning includes not only adapting to, but actually shaping the external environment. (Bennis 1966:7)

Bennis and Slater (1968:75) illustrate the concept:

...in the new adaptive organizations...work groups will be temporary systems which means that people will have to learn to develop quick and intense relationships on the job and learn to bear the absence of more enduring work relationships.

Within these new adaptive organizations they do predict increased motivation, and, thereby, effectiveness because persons can gain satisfaction from the task itself.

The adaptability of temporary systems makes them theoretically appropriate as tools in the problem-solving and decision-making processes. This possibility is examined in the following section.

Problem Solving and Temporary Systems

Problem-solving is one of the most commonly cited uses for temporary systems. (Zand 1974, Bennis 1976, Bennis and Slater 1968, Toffler 1970, Briner and Sroufe 1971, and Ohm 1971). Bennis and Slater (1968:73) claim:

...the tasks of the organization will be more technical, complicated, and unprogrammed.
 ...Essentially they will call for the collaboration of specialists in a project or team form of organization.

This will be further complicated by the multiplicity of operative goals that have always existed (Cyert and March 1963) and will likely increase in number and complexity (Bennis and Slater 1968). Ohm (1971:93) sees the increasing use of interdisciplinary teams set up on an ad hoc basis as necessary, considering the complexity of problems now faced by teams of specialists. These ad hoc teams will often include members from within and outside the organization. Bennis (1966:158) terms the use of such teams to aid in decision making a "multilateral brokerage process." This concept is related to education by Briner and Sroufe (1971:86) who see help for teachers provided by a "...problem solving task force quickly called on from a community resource and staff personnel pool."

They extend the temporary systems concept in an educational setting:

We should imagine a task force or cadre taking over a school or initiating a special program for certain students within a school on a "turn-key" basis as dramatic efforts to improve instruction.

This "performance contracting" approach is not new in education. In spite of some limited success the practice has lost credibility in both public and educational circles (Hopkirk 1976) but this appears to have resulted from the misapplication rather than the inappropriateness of the theory. The use of "turn-key" operations as effective task forces still appears to have some potential viability.

The temporary system provides a model that could allow persons in organizations to deal with increasingly "ill-structured" problems (Zand 1974). Bennis' (1976:60) summation of the issue to be dealt with is appropriately blunt: "The name of the game will be 'ambiguity' and people had damn well better get used to it and learn how to cope with it."

It is in this sense that management of and leadership within temporary systems becomes a theme worthy of examination.

Leadership and Temporary Systems

The contingency approach to leadership espoused by Fiedler (1967) appeared to be a solution to managing certain variations in organizational problems. This approach to organizational engineering which involves matching leaders with situations has been criticised as being over-simplified (Garland and O'Reilly 1976). This criticism appears valid if the situations constantly are in a state of flux and "ambiguity" plays as prominent a role as previously stated.

If the organizational engineering approach of Fiedler,

which combines traits and situation approaches, is too simple, then what form of leadership patterns can deal with the anticipated ambiguous future?

Bennis (1976:160) suggests a manager's first and foremost priority is "...to create around him some kind of executive team." This is in line with Drucker (1954:167) who claims "...90 percent of the trouble we are having with the chief executive's job is rooted in our superstition of the one man chief."

When utilizing teams of managers and leaders organizations are faced with new concerns. A number of these are discussed in a later section of this literature review concerning Dysfunctions of Temporary Systems. Suffice it to say at this point that project and problem solving teams are going to require leadership skills considerably different from those employed in many present day organizations. Bennis and Slater (1968:101-112) prescribe the tasks of organizational leadership suitable for future oriented organizations. These include (1) integration or developing rewarding human systems in the Barnard-Simon inducements, contributions context; (2) social influence or developing executive constellation; (3) collaboration and the building of a collaborative climate; (4) adaptation and identification with the adaptive process; (5) building supraorganizational goals because "Organizations, like individuals, suffer from identity crisis" (p 109); and (6) revitalization. These new, or at least, reworded tasks of

leadership have been prescribed in the light of organizations of the future inculcated with temporary structures.

These leadership skills that will enable one to manage a contemporary future-oriented organization will only be found in the professional ranks.

Silverman and Heming (1975) claim that a new breed of manager has evolved. The "Professional Person" has replaced the "Organization Man." The "Professional Person" is committed firstly to his profession rather than to the organization for which he may be working at any particular time. The "Professional Person" "...looks upon himself as an individual marketing three interrelated products: his knowledge, his skills and his competencies" (Silverman and Heming 1975:147). The concept of the "Professional Person" as seen by Silverman and Heming is as important in education as it is in business, particularly when temporary systems are considered.

The Professional Person needs the tangible participation in the organization, achieved by creating decentralized organizational units, in order to manage within the control of the overall organization or by establishing task team, temporary work assignments and other ad hoc groups. ...The Professional Person will eventually alter traditional organization structures drastically by the temporary task-team approach which cuts radically across functional, divisional and department lines (Silverman and Heming 1975:147).

This concept of the "Professional Person," as functioning within temporary systems and between

bureaucracies, is compatible with human resource writers, particularly Likert (1961, 1967) who sees persons at various levels of the organization acting as "linking pins." The following statement is perhaps the most succinct with respect to the relationship of leadership and temporary systems.

The social structure of organizations of the future will have some unique characteristics. The key word will be "temporary". There will be adaptive, rapidly changing temporary systems. These will be task forces organized around problems to be solved by groups of relative strangers with diverse professional skills. The group will be arranged in an organic rather than mechanical model; it will evolve in response to a problem rather than to programmed role expectations. The executive thus becomes the coordinator or "linking pin" between various task forces. He must be a man who can speak the polyglot jargon of research, with skills to relay information and to mediate between groups. People will be evaluated not according to rank but according to skill and professional training. Organizational charts will consist of project groups rather than stratified functional groups (Bennis and Slater 1968:73-4).

Political Variables and Temporary Systems

Temporary systems have been utilized to a great extent in "political" activities where they can become a means of involvement, information gathering, and policy formulation. The royal commission, white paper, policy group, or citizens' committee are examples of temporary systems utilized in a "political" sense. As more and more constituencies desire a chance to voice their opinions the frequency of temporary system use will likely increase. Benveniste (1972:85) suggests that task forces or ad hoc

bodies can be effective to undertake an overview of a society wide policy:

The scope of discussion may be as broad as the goals of the nation or as specific as the problems of violence, urban survival, education, land use, pollution, pornography, or any other subject of general and multi-organizational interest.

These ad hoc bodies can be formed quickly and can cut across organizational and even societal bounds. With increasing conflict and contradiction within and between organizations (Bennis and Slater 1968:73) the task force mode can be utilized as a conflict-resolution technique. A key question with respect to the utilization of task forces in a political environment concerns the motive behind the use of the task force. Is it to appease individuals and groups by making them feel involved (human relations) or is it to produce better decisions through the involvement of key individuals (human resources)? The task force mode can be effective in both instances.

The need for more involvement, for whatever reasons, is often expressed in the literature on educational governance (Cistone 1972, Housego 1972, and Barger 1972). Increased use of temporary systems may provide the vehicle for this involvement.

The demands, both direct and indirect, for the increased use of temporary systems stem from many sources, for many reasons. These demands are based on the belief that temporary systems have certain characteristics that make them appropriate structures for use in organizational life

in the future. The following section examines these characteristics as they have been reported in the literature.

CHARACTERISTICS OF TEMPORARY SYSTEMS

In an effort to view the characteristics of temporary systems in an ordered fashion a model developed by Steiner (1972) has been utilized. The model was developed for use in studying small task groups and provides a conceptual framework with which to categorize various components of temporary systems found in the literature. Steiner (1972) divides data on task groups into four categories, namely, task demands, resources, process, and productivity.

Task demands according to Steiner (1972:7):

...include the requirements imposed on the individual or group by the task itself, or by the rules under which the task must be performed. Such requirements determine whether a particular resource (knowledge, ability, skill, or tool) is relevant, how much of each kind of resource is needed for optimal performance, and how the various relevant resources must be combined and utilized in order to produce the best possible outcome.

Resources include knowledge, abilities, and tools possessed by group members and the distribution of these entities within the group.

Task demands specify what is needed to carry a project to completion, while resources specify what is actually possessed by the task group in question. Together, the task demands and participants' resources determine the "maximum" level of productivity that can be achieved (Steiner 1972:80).

Process consists of the actual steps or collective actions taken by a group when confronted with a task (Steiner 1972:9). Process includes variables such as communication techniques, decision-making modes, and other organizational activities necessary in striving toward task completion.

Productivity is the result achieved by a task group. This result may be material or psychic as is the case with member satisfaction. Productivity depends directly on task demands, resources, and process. Steiner (1972:9) explains it thus:

It is apparent that task demands specify the resources that are needed, and the manner in which they should be employed, in order to generate a good product. The adequacy of the resources available to an individual or group determines its potential productivity; the appropriateness of its processes determines how well its actual productivity approximates its potential productivity.

Actual productivity = potential productivity - losses due to faulty process. So one group (task force) may be more successful than another "...because it has a better supply of relevant resources, or because its processes more fully meet the demands of task, or both." (Steiner 1972:9) This provides a framework within which to examine general features of temporary systems in this portion of the literature. It also provides a framework for the presentation of data relevant to specific temporary systems under study. This latter aspect is developed more fully in Chapter 3.

Task Demands

Steiner (1972:viii) notes a deficiency in early studies of group or task force productivity. He claims that investigators paid little attention to the demands which tasks impose upon groups. Task determines both the adequacy of resources and the efficacy of the process within the group setting. This notion is supported by the work of Leavitt (1965) but has not been recognized by many of the "group dynamics" writers.

Steiner (1972:15) defines task as:

...a set of specifications identifying the goal that is to be achieved and the procedures that an individual or group may employ when attempting to achieve it.

Steiner's (1972:37-39) partial typology of tasks allows classification and selection of tasks which appear appropriate for completion by temporary systems, in general, and task forces, in particular. His first type, unitary tasks, cannot be divided into subtasks and consequently the group product must be the outcome generated by a single member or some combination of the outcomes of several members. The other type, divisible tasks, can be broken into specialized subtasks, each of which may be performed by a different person. Within each of the preceding types, tasks can be further broken down into disjunctive (requiring an "either or" decision), conjunctive (dependent upon the ability of least productive member), additive (dependent upon the sum of individual efforts), or discretionary

(allowing members to combine their individual contributions in a manner of their choosing).

Aside from the nature of the task to be performed by a temporary system, other task-related constraints operate and affect the functioning of the system. As stated previously the time variable is a key concept in temporary system operation. Another feature worthy of note is initial goal definition (Miles 1964:453). Temporary systems ordinarily deal with a sharply focused range of content. This goal focus generates a high degree of persistency and a high expectancy of success. The temporary system usually "...frees members' energies to concentrate on a particular aspect of a keenly felt problem" (Miles 1964:453). In addition, the goal focus of a temporary system can produce a "clean slate" effect whereby members can be constantly involved in starting something new. Definite goal focus allows members of a temporary system to succeed or fail at a well-defined task. This is not often possible under a permanent hierarchical structure.

Boundary maintenance operations is another key functional characteristic of most temporary systems. The system's boundaries are usually clear and nonpermeable.

Miles (1964:453) claims:

Membership in ad hoc committees, conferences, and the like is ordinarily explicitly defined; additions during the life of the system are discouraged unless they involve an important contribution to the task, and every effort is made to "keep people aboard."

Boundary maintenance is an ongoing task of the members of a temporary system that, if not attended to, can have dysfunctional consequences (Benveniste 1972:153). Boundary maintenance can further goal focus, minimize socialization problems, and reduce internal conflict (Miles 1964), but at the same time can lead to dysfunctional consequences (Janis 1972) which may be disastrous. This particular phenomenon, groupthink, is discussed in the section of the literature review pertaining to dysfunctions of temporary systems.

Task demands of temporary systems often require physical and social isolation of the membership (Miles 1964:456). Members are often separated from their "usual" activities when they are involved in a system or structure of a temporary nature. This isolation has several consequences. It removes the barriers to change (Lewin 1951); reduces role conflicts and increases task orientation (Miles 1964); provides a protective function (Miles 1964, Janis 1972); and develops group cohesiveness (Miles 1964, Janis 1972, Bryce 1973).

Another task demand placed on temporary systems relates to group size. Of course, temporary systems can vary from groups of two to literally thousands. Size is a contingency which affects the working of various types of systems in unique ways.

Steiner (1972:83) summarizes aspects of group size that affect task performance:

As a group increases in size, its organizational

problems become more difficult to solve in the best possible manner. If the task is unitary, large groups must discover and establish a procedure for coordinating and combining the efforts of many persons, whereas for small groups the required integrative processes are generally less complex. If the task is divisible, the number of subtasks into which it must be divided in order that a large group can make full use of its available resources is likely to be great, but even if the number of subtasks is constant, an increase in group size will compound the complexity of the problem of matching individuals with subtasks. Consequently, as new members are added to a group, process losses are likely to increase, sometimes at an accelerating rate. In certain cases, the increment of process loss entailed by enlarging a group will exceed the increment of potential productivity that is contributed by new members. When this happens, large groups will, of course, manifest lower actual productivity than small groups.

Other research results relating to group size that appear applicable to temporary systems are numerous and often contradictory. Shaw (1960) found individuals tend to work harder in small groups than in large ones. Thelen (1949) points out that poor individual performance is especially visible in small groups. Barker (1960, 1968) found that the degree of responsibility felt by members varies inversely with group size.

Steiner (1972:85) states: "...another line of research suggests that people are likely to obtain fewer personal satisfactions from participation in large groups than from small ones."

Slater (1958) in a study of ad hoc groups suggests that both undermanning and overmanning have adverse effects on motivation. Many of these findings have resulted from

laboratory research with simple problems and tasks and may or may not apply to situations involving complex, non-routine tasks.

In this regard, Zand (1974) claims temporary collateral organizations are more effective in dealing with ill-structured problems. Formal hierarchical organizations tend to concentrate on the routine at the expense of the nonroutine (Bennis 1976:20). Thus, temporary systems appear to function more effectively when dealing with nonroutine problems.

These task demands placed on a temporary system will determine the resources necessary to meet the specified demands.

Resources

As stated earlier resources include the knowledge, abilities, and tools possessed by group members and the distribution of these entities within the group. The type of individuals presumably has considerable impact on the effectiveness of the task group but the literature is not at all clear in this regard.

Steiner (1972:12) claims:

We know a good deal about people's reactions to specific social situations, but know much less about the mechanisms by which two or more people react to one another to produce long sequences of collective action.

It appears that various types of tasks would clearly demand persons with particular skills. For other types of tasks the necessary resources may not be so clear.

Status of membership does not appear to be as important in ad hoc groups as in intact groups (Torrence 1954).

Steiner (1972:25), speaking of ad hoc groups, says that:

"...when a group has neither a history or a future, status has less effect on group process." Confidence in one's own ability to contribute to a problem solution is directly related to group effectiveness (Johnson and Torcivia 1967).

The creative type solutions often arrived at by temporary systems (Bryce 1973, Zand 1974, Bennis 1976) suggest the need for creative persons as members of these systems. The literature is not clear as to whether temporary systems merely attract creative people or whether they tend to develop creativity in all members.

Thus, little is known about the types of individuals who operate effectively and comfortably in a temporary system.

Process

Process as defined by Steiner (1972:9) is the actual steps or collective actions taken by a group when confronted with a task.

Several processes operating in most temporary systems result from the coherent, narrowed time perspective. Aside from the increased output of energy for a limited period of time (usually increasing toward the end of the time allotment), Miles (1964:459) suggests that "...distorted perceptions of elapsed time takes place." He suggests this effect may stem from the removal of the usual time markers

and the intensive work level.

A second process common to most temporary systems is goal redefinition (Miles 1964:459). Although the goal of a temporary system is usually established at the inception of the system, goal redefinition often serves to gain commitment from the membership. Goal redefinition also becomes a way in which a group can develop social skills. As a result of this goal redefinition members of a temporary group often feel a high sense of involvement, perhaps greater than during any activity in a permanent organization (Goffman 1961).

Miles (1964:463) claims that well defined procedures are extremely important to members of a temporary system. Because members are dealing with many uncertainties the procedures provide some measure of predicability, controllability, and compellingness. Miles (1964:464) suggests these three features "...contribute strongly to the usefulness of temporary systems in bringing about innovation."

During the course of an individual's involvement in a temporary system he is given opportunities for "...role redefinition, and the refashioning of his identity" (Miles 1964:465). This role definition and socialization is characteristic of most persons involved in temporary systems. The individual has considerable opportunity and freedom to experiment without being hampered by the role expectations others usually hold for him. Miles (1964)

claims the work of Cumming and Cumming (1962), Talbot, Miller, and White (1962), Schein et al. (1961), Hagen (1962), and Riecken (1952) supports the notion of role redefinition within temporary systems.

Another necessary process common to most temporary systems is the degree to which participants are encouraged to communicate. Miles (1964:467-468) suggests three reasons. Firstly, communication to groups outside the system is decreased and a common language tends to grow up within the group; secondly, formal hierarchical roles are not retained by members of the temporary system; and thirdly, increased interaction causes members to become more open and trustful. These things lead to the development of equal status relationships among members. Miles (1964:468) claims:

Such processes occur in any social system, of course, but in a slowed-down, masked form. Temporary systems seem to encourage them; the net effect is that more and better data are available for system problem-solving.

Star, Williams, and Stouffer (1958), Thelen (1954), and Cook (1957) provide support for this development of "equal-status relationships" within temporary systems.

As a result of the interaction of members in a temporary system certain unique, shared sentiments appear to arise. Early defensiveness and formality (Miles 1964, Gibb 1964); playfulness (Miles 1964, Bryce 1973); interpersonal liking (Miles 1964); esprit de corps (Bryce 1973, Miles 1964, Bennis 1966); and involvement (Miles 1964, Bryce 1973, Zand 1974) are the most common of these sentiments.

In addition to the preceding sentiments that develop in a temporary system certain norms are common. Miles (1964) claims that equalitarianism, authenticity, inquiry, hypotheticality (involving experimental solutions), novelty (change for its own sake), and effortfulness are norms that exist in most temporary systems.

The processes examined in this section illustrate to some degree the uniqueness of temporary systems as an organizational form. It is these processes that determine the actual output or product of a temporary system.

Productivity

The products of temporary systems are of considerable variety. Such diverse products as a final report, member satisfaction, relationship changes, personality changes, learning outcomes, problem solutions, and self-renewal capacities are all outcomes of temporary systems of one form or another.

Bennis (1966) claims temporary systems produce satisfaction. Zand (1974) and Bogue (1971) claim that temporary systems can produce creative solutions to ill-structured problems. Benveniste (1972:85) asserts that temporary systems "...search out the nature of the problems," which is difficult for a hierarchical organization to do. Innovative techniques could result from "learning alliances" (Worth 1972:202), a form of temporary system. Temporary learning systems provide students with cognitive skills and affective outcomes. Little recent

research, however, exists that examines the effectiveness of temporary systems for producing these outcomes.

Miles (1964) reviewed the literature existing at the time regarding the outputs of temporary systems. He saw "person changes" in attitudes, knowledge, or behavior as one type of temporary system output. Cited are such diverse findings as increased alienation, increased pacifism, and lessened egocentricity (Riecken 1952); increased optimism, more tolerance toward non conformist views (Hyman, Wright and Hopkins 1962); increased congruence between actual and ideal states in temporary psychotherapeutic systems (Shlien, Mosak and Dreikurs 1962); and increased equalitarian behavior (Miles 1964).

Another output of the temporary systems mode is relationship changes. Organization development activities that have utilized temporary systems are claimed to be very effective in this area. McMillan (1975), Argyris (1962), Bennis (1962), Likert (1967), Beckhard (1969), Blake et al. (1972), Davis (1972), Bowers (1973), and Gelula (1975), all report varying degrees of success in their utilization of organization development (OD) techniques that include the use of temporary systems. In a number of school settings, Schmuck and Runkel (1970) also claim similar success. Indications of success in many of the preceding efforts could be viewed with some skepticism. Schmuck and Miles (1971:231) claim "...most OD practitioners are not researchers; they do not systematically evaluate the

outcomes of interventions except in informal ways."

Few studies have used productivity as an indicator of successful OD activity. Friedlander and Brown (in Kimberley and Neilson 1975), after an extensive review of the literature, conclude that most OD studies look only at process variables and few look at productivity as a measure of their effectiveness.

A final category of outputs is suggested by Miles (1964). Action decisions are frequently carried out as a result of involvement in a temporary system. Pelz (1958) also found that decisions arrived at in a temporary setting were often carried out.

Other forms of decision outputs produced by temporary systems often include policy recommendations or structural changes for permanent organizations.

Not all of the outcomes of temporary systems are positive in nature. The following section of the literature review will pay some attention to this point.

DYSFUNCTIONS OF TEMPORARY SYSTEMS

Temporary systems, like any organizational form, are fraught with dysfunctional aspects, some of these resulting from the nature of the "temporariness" of the system. This section will look at the literature that points directly at dysfunctional aspects of temporary systems, as well as at dysfunctions in small group process that might also affect the functioning of task forces as a form of temporary system.

Miles (1964:480) sees input overload as a dysfunctional aspect of temporary systems. Participants in a temporary system tend to invite or accept an unrealistic amount of input. This may be deliberate on the part of the designers of the system but also a group will force itself to work far harder in the temporary setting than in a more controlled situation. This becomes dysfunctional in the long run when members' mental and physical health suffers.

Unrealistic goal setting is also seen by Miles (1964:481) as a dysfunctional characteristic of temporary systems. The nature of temporary systems invites a feeling of unwarranted optimism among members. Janis (1972) supports this notion in his study of a phenomenon called groupthink. In a discussion of the work done by a task force, Benveniste (1972:86) says while the proposals developed may be "...imaginative or courageous, they also have little hold on the immediate reality." The utopian atmosphere existant in a temporary system can have dysfunctional side effects. Bennis (1976:97) asserts:

Obviously if our institutions start adopting everything new, they will merely become trendy, disposable systems, with no inner core or integrity.

In most groups, in general, and temporary task groups, in particular, considerable process skills are necessary to provide for efficient functioning. Miles (1964:481) says "...the task - relevant and interpersonal skills required in the intensive climate of the temporary system may be

substantial." Because these skills are so crucial in the operation of a temporary system, its entire mission may fail with less than optimal process skills. Steiner (1972:3) claims:

Among the many possible patterns of collective action that may be employed to meet a given need, some are likely to be much more productive than others, and a few may be utterly dysfunctional.

Steiner (1972:38-39) identifies four process factors that can contribute to dysfunctions in temporary task groups. These are (a) failure of status differences to parallel the quality of the contributions offered by participating members; (b) the low level of confidence proficient members sometimes have in their own ability to perform the task; (c) the social pressures that an incompetent majority may exert on a competent minority; and (d) the fact that the quality of individual contributions is often very difficult to evaluate.

A serious problem associated with temporary systems is alienation. Miles (1964:482) states:

Because the members of the temporary system are usually isolated from the surrounding environment, and communicate more with each other than with members of permanent systems, they tend to become alienated, detached, uninvolved.

This is evident in cases where groups or individuals go on a retreat to improve communication skills. They often find they are less able to communicate with members of their organization (those who did not attend the retreat) than they were previously. Another form of alienation often occurs

as a result of temporary systems. It arises from the necessity of considerable job mobility being essential to some types of temporary systems. Bennis and Slater (1968:77) express it thus:

One obvious effect of the widespread extension of temporary systems would be a sharp increase in job mobility. If task forces are to be organized on a temporary basis around specific problems there is no particular reason why their formation should be locally restricted.

However, job mobility, which is required in the project or term management approach, places considerable stress on certain individuals. Imundo (1974:910) describes mobile managers as:

...high task and achievement oriented individuals who have developed the mental and physical capacity to adjust to changes in responsibilities and relationships on a continuing basis.

Because all managers (or principals) are not like this, they cannot realistically be treated as interchangeable parts.

A major problem with corporate mobility arises when a manager is required to relocate his place of residence. The effects on the family life and social relationships of the relocated manager are so dramatic that many corporations are changing their employee transfer policies, e.g., Kaiser Aluminum, 3M, General Electric.

Slater (1964:79) recognizes two primary consequences of increased mobility as a result of temporary systems. In the first place the process of "individuation" occurs. This involves the separation of the individual from those permanent groups that "...provide him with ready made values

and traits and from which he derives his identity" (Slater 1964:78). The second primary consequence is concomitant feelings of alienation, anomie, and meaninglessness. Slater (1964:80) claims: "When an individual loses a more or less permanent role in a permanent group, his specialization becomes pointless and somewhat burdensome."

Three secondary consequences are also seen as potential offshoots from continual operation in a temporary systems framework (Slater 1964:83-96). These are interchangeability, other-directedness, and changes in the marital relationship. Interchangeability eliminates any fixed basis for human relationships. Temporary working groups will have little in common outside the task. Other-directedness refers to a form of "moral relativism." An individual will have to be "...acutely sensitive and responsive to group norms while recognizing the essential arbitrariness, particularity, and limited relevance of all moral imperatives" (Slater 1964:87). Changes in the marital relationship will undoubtedly occur as temporary system use increases, however, the direction of these changes is difficult to predict. It could be that the marital relationship will intensify because of its permanence in a temporary society or increased strain could occur as husband and wife both attempt to pursue a career that involves temporary structures as the dominant organizational form.

Another of the major dysfunctions of temporary systems per se relates to the way they interact with permanent

structures. Without constant interaction between permanent and temporary structures the work of the latter can be fruitless. Miles (1964:483) speaks to this issue of linkage failure:

...the very detachment and euphoria which make time-limited systems so fascinating and productive help to blind the participants to what they will be up against when they return to "ordinary" life with its role conflicts, work pressures and vested interests.

If the temporary system exists without the sanction of permanent systems the linkage failure will be even more acute. Miles (1964:483) suggests the problems are "...most critical when the temporary system is essentially innovative in intent." This is supported by Brim (1954) in his work with a temporary system.

Bennis (1976:3) illustrates the linkage failure that can occur when he speaks of "blue ribbon" task forces:

Nothing insures the status quo so much as putting the best minds and best talents on these task forces. For their reports continue to get better as our problems get worse.

Benveniste (1972:86) concurs: "...once a task force or presidential commission is abolished, there remains no advocate for the suggested policies."

This problem of linkage failure is not easily solved. Speaking of Congressional task forces, Benveniste (1972:86) illustrates the other side of the dilemma:

Their life span is limited, generally ending with the publication of a set of recommendations. The principle reason for their transience is that they encroach on the prerogatives of existing organizations and institutions, and this

encroachment can only be tolerated for a finite period. Moreover, if they were not abolished they would want to continue to influence policy, and..., they might acquire more power than Congress or other agencies of the executive want them to have.

Irving Janis (1972) in a study of a number of policy making bodies points out a potentially dysfunctional phenomenon of cohesive groups. He terms the phenomenon "groupthink." He feels that groups can bring out the worst as well as the best in man. Janis (1972:3) claims:

...lack of vigilance and excessive risk-taking are forms of temporary group derangement to which decision making groups made up of responsible executives are not at all immune.

Janis (1972) sees groupthink as an easy way to refer to a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are striving for unanimity as members of a cohesive group. This attempt at unanimity overrides their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action. "Groupthink refers to a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgement that results from ingroup pressures" (Janis 1972:9). He claims the danger of groupthink increases as amiability and esprit de corps increases. Symptoms of groupthink outlined by Janis (1972:197-198) are:

1. an illusion of invulnerability, shared by most or all the members, which creates excessive optimism and encourages taking extreme risks;
2. collective efforts to rationalize in order to discount warnings which might lead the members to reconsider their assumptions before they recommit

themselves to their past policy decisions;

3. an unquestioned belief in the group's morality, inclining the members to ignore the ethical or moral consequences of their decisions;

4. stereotyped views of enemy leaders as too evil to warrant genuine attempts to negotiate, or as too real and stupid to counter whatever risky attempts are made to defeat their purposes;

5. direct pressure on any member who expresses strong arguments against any of the group's stereotypes, illusions, or commitments, making clear that this type of dissent is contrary to what is expected of all loyal members;

6. self-censorship of deviations from the apparent group consensus, reflecting each member's inclination to minimize to himself the importance of his doubts and counterarguments;

7. a shared illusion of unanimity concerning judgments conforming to the majority view (partly resulting from self-censorship of deviations, augmented by the false assumption that silence means consent);

8. the emergence of self-appointed mindguards - members who protect the group from adverse information that might shatter their shared complacency about the effectiveness and morality of their decisions.

The idea of groupthink is not a product of the 1970's.

Leavitt and Whisler (1964:589) state:

We surmise that the "groupthink" which is frightening some people today will be commonplace in top management of the future. For while the innovators and the programmers may maintain or even increase their autonomy, and while the committor may be more independent than ever of lower-line levels, the interdependence of the top-staff oligarchy should increase with the increasing complexity of their tasks. The committor may be forced increasingly to have the top men operate as a committee, which would mean that the precise individual locus of decision may become even more obscure than it is today. The small-group psychologists, the researchers on creativity, the clinicians - should all find a

surfeit of work at that level.

Because of the nature of most types of temporary systems they appear to be extremely susceptible to the groupthink phenomenon.

SUMMARY

In this chapter a four section review of the literature, related directly to the study purpose and tasks, was presented.

The initial section provided an overview of the temporary systems concept. Definitions of temporary systems were presented along with the general functions of such systems. One type of temporary system, Zand's (1974) collateral organization, was discussed in some detail.

The second section examined the demands for temporary systems which exist in the literature. Demands for temporary systems were examined as they relate to bureaucratization, adaptability, decision making and problem solving, leadership, and, finally, political process.

In the third section was presented a review of the characteristics of temporary systems. These characteristics were classified using a conceptual framework developed by Steiner (1972). The framework contained four categories, namely, task demands, resources, process, and productivity.

The final section reviewed major dysfunctions, both actual and potential, attributed to temporary systems in the literature.

The following chapter outlines details of the study

design and methodology.

Chapter 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The research design is presented and discussed in this chapter. In this regard, the following topics are examined: the major research questions, the nature of the study, methodology, assumptions, delimitations, and limitations.

THE MAJOR STUDY QUESTIONS

As stated in Chapter 1 the purpose of the study was to examine a limited number of temporary systems with particular emphasis on their utility, both actual and potential, as an organizational arrangement in education.

The specific tasks necessary for the fulfilment of this purpose were to:

1. describe in detail five temporary systems with respect to specific characteristics attributed to temporary systems in the literature on organizations;
2. determine the perceived purpose for which each of the temporary systems in question was established;
3. determine the perceived effectiveness of each temporary system in achieving its purpose(s);
4. determine the perceived impact of the characteristics described as a result of task 1 (above), on the effectiveness of the temporary system;
5. examine the perceived direct and indirect effects of each temporary system on its membership.

Research Questions

The following specific research questions qualify the preceding study purpose:

Question I

Which of the following characteristics were present in the temporary system in question?

- A. task orientation
 - 1. high task orientation
 - 2. low task orientation
- B. end point of system
 - 1. time-linked
 - 2. event-linked
 - 3. state-(condition) linked
- C. nature of the task
 - 1. structured
 - 2. ill-structured
- D. decision making mode
 - 1. participative group
 - 2. consultative
 - 3. benevolent-authoritative
 - 4. exploitive-authoritative
- E. goal setting
 - 1. realistic
 - 2. unrealistic
- F. communication patterns
 - 1. within system
 - 2. between temporary system and specific environment
- G. emerging leadership
- H. group characteristics
 - 1. group size
 - 2. group atmosphere
 - 3. status relationships
 - 4. mix of individuals
 - 5. adaptability-flexibility
 - 6. expenditure of energy
- I. information
 - 1. sources
 - 2. overload
- J. innovativeness and desire to experiment

Question II

What was the purpose of the temporary system in question?

- A. What was the formal purpose(s) of the temporary system as articulated by the parent organization?
 - 1. maintenance
 - 2. short-term task accomplishment
 - 3. change (treatment)

4. change (re-educative)

5. change (educative)

B. What was the purpose of the temporary system as perceived by the membership?

1. maintenance

2. short-term task accomplishment

3. change (treatment)

4. change (re-educative)

5. change (educative)

Question III

Did the temporary system in question fulfil the purposes as articulated by the membership?

Question IV

What impact, as perceived by the temporary system membership, did the various characteristics presented in Question I have on the effectiveness (degree to which purpose was achieved) of the temporary systems in question?

Question V

What perceived direct and indirect impact did participation in the temporary system have on its membership?

Specifically:

A. job satisfaction

B. future endeavours

1. career pattern

2. personal interests

3. professional growth

4. general lifestyle

NATURE OF THE STUDY

This study could be described as a series of five case studies. In a case study, claims VanDalen (1973:207):

...an educator makes an intensive investigation of a social unit. He gathers pertinent data about the present status, past experiences, and environmental forces that contribute to the individuality and behavior of the unit.

Gee (1950:232) states that case studies may be justified:

...on the basis of (1) the fact that it is only through exhaustive studies that new relationships are discovered or described accurately, and (2) that every individual case has characteristics which may be regarded as typical or representative of a large number of cases. Thus it is that the case method lends itself best to the early, exploratory stages of research, and is greatly useful in establishing by analogy trial hypotheses for empirical testing.

As the study in question is exploratory in nature the case method seems appropriate.

Good (1969:36) claims that a significant trend in the case approach is its extension: "...beyond the individual to include study of social institutions or agencies and communities or cultural groups."

Lipset et al. (1970:169) differentiate between two general types of empirical analysis of a single case:

(a) Description and explanation of the single case, to provide information concerning its present state, and the dynamics through which it continues as it does. This may be called a particularizing analysis.

(b) The development of empirical generalizations or theory through the analysis of the single case, using it not to discover anything about it as a system but as an empirical basis either for generalization or theory construction. This may be called a generalizing analysis.

In the present study the latter type, i.e., the generalizing analysis, has received the major emphasis.

METHODOLOGY

Sample Selection

Initially, a series of interviews was conducted with key individuals in five educational organizations in the province of Alberta, Canada. Specifically, this "panel of

experts" with whom the interviews were conducted consisted of 5 officers of the Alberta Department of Education, 2 officers of the Alberta Teachers' Association, 1 officer of the Alberta School Trustees' Association, 2 officers of the Edmonton Public School District, and 5 officers of the Strathcona County school system. The purpose of conducting these initial interviews was to identify temporary systems that have existed within these organizations since 1970. A temporary system was defined as an organizational form designed to complete a task, solve a problem, or bring about a condition. The system from its inception was known to be of limited duration and the criteria for dissolution were known to the membership.

Interviewees were asked to differentiate between two types of temporary systems. A pure temporary system was one in which the system ceased to exist for all members within the temporary system at the same time and all members were working only within the temporary system during its existence. A collateral temporary system was one which co-existed with a formal organization. Members worked in the formal organization on a regular basis but were seconded to work in the temporary system on a part-time basis.

As a result of the interviews, 19 temporary systems, 2 pure and 17 collateral, were identified. From this number, 5 systems were selected for indepth analysis. Because the study was exploratory in nature no attempt was made to select temporary systems that were representative

(statistically) of all temporary systems in a larger population. The emphasis was on the discovery of relationships and, thus, the 5 particular temporary systems were selected in order to provide the diversity necessary to examine directly many of the aspects of temporary systems found in the literature. This diversity includes temporary systems that vary in type, duration, size, mix of participants, and governing organization. Each temporary system selected was recommended by two or more members of the "panel of experts" as suitable for the study.

The Sample

The following five temporary systems provided the sample for the study:

1. The Planning Programming Budgeting and Evaluation System (PPBES) Task Force of the Alberta Department of Education. This was a pure temporary system with four members.

2. The Northland Study Group of the Alberta Department of Education. This was a collateral temporary system with three members.

3. The Junior High School Mathematics Consortium Executive. This was a collateral temporary system with eight members. The consortium was under the jurisdiction of the Edmonton Public School Board.

4. The Strathcona French Project of the Strathcona County School Board. This was a collateral temporary system with four members.

5. The Alberta Teachers Association Task Force on Accreditation. This was a collateral temporary system with eight members.

Data were collected, utilizing a questionnaire and interview techniques, from all members of each temporary system (n=27). In addition, data regarding the history and formal purposes of the temporary systems were extracted from appropriate documentation.

Instrumentation

Two issues were considered when the choice of instrumentation was made. Firstly, the manageability of collecting data from busy respondents and, secondly, the procuring of what Good (1972) calls "best evidence."

The data to be collected varied in nature from simple and straightforward to complex and open-ended. Thus, it was decided to collect part of the data using a questionnaire and part utilizing a semi-structured interview. Gordon (1975:78) provides support:

When we design a research strategy, we must not assume that we need to choose between a mailed questionnaire or an interview. It is possible to collect part of the information in one way and part in the other.

The questionnaire was highly structured with respondents asked to select answers to questions from a range provided. This is appropriate because parts of the questionnaire were developed from standardized instruments whose validity and reliability were established under conditions where respondents were required to answer in

written form.

Part of the interview schedule was highly structured and was utilized mainly to validate responses presented in the questionnaire. Because the study was exploratory in nature, a second portion of the interview was open-ended and, in part, unstructured. Gorden (1975:78-77) suggests the unstructured interview is useful for discovery and he provides five reasons for this:

1. it provides accurate and complete information immediately;
2. it provides an opportunity to assist respondents in their interpretations of the questions;
3. it allows greater flexibility in questioning;
4. it allows considerable control over the interview situation;
5. it provides an opportunity to evaluate the validity of the information by observing the respondent's non-verbal manifestations.

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire (Appendix A) constructed for the study contains six sections. In the first section, entitled PERSONAL DATA, information was solicited regarding age, sex, educational background, experience in temporary systems, and general experience in education.

In the second section respondents were asked to rate the importance and extent of achievement of specific purposes. The purposes were extracted from the literature on

temporary systems. The importance scale is a five point Likert-type scale that ranges from "extremely important" to "not important". The achievement scale is a three point scale that ranges from "fully achieved" to "not achieved". This latter scale is supplemented with a fourth possible response category labelled "not applicable."

In the third section of the questionnaire, labelled CHARACTERISTICS AND EFFECTIVENESS, respondents were presented with characteristics attributed to temporary systems in the literature and asked to what degree each characteristic existed in the particular temporary system in which they had worked. Responses were given on a five point Likert-type frequency scale ranging from "always" to "never."

ENVIRONMENT was the title of the fourth section where respondents were asked to describe the group atmosphere that existed in the temporary system. This section utilized Fiedler's (1967) Group Atmosphere (GA) scale. This scale is a semantic differential type instrument consisting of ten bi-polar pairs of adjectives. Respondents were asked to select, on an eight point scale, an appropriate score for each pair that best described the group atmosphere. In the fifth section of the questionnaire titled SATISFACTION, respondents were asked to compare their satisfaction in a hierarchical position with their satisfaction as a member of a temporary system. The instrument was adapted from the short form of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire

(Weiss et al. 1967). Respondents rated their satisfaction with 20 components of the work situation on a five point Likert-type scale ranging from "very dissatisfied" to "very satisfied".

In the final section of the questionnaire dealing with IDEAL TASK FORCES, respondents were asked to speculate as to the importance of certain characteristics to the process and the outcome of an effective task force. They were asked to respond to each characteristic on a five point Likert-type scale ranging from "extremely important" to "not important."

The questionnaire required 133 responses. It was administered to 27 persons, all of whom returned usable data.

The Interview

For reasons stated earlier the interview guide (Appendix B) was partially open-ended and partially unstructured.

Interviewees were asked initially to verify and extend information provided in the questionnaire. The interview guide was divided into sections similar to those utilized in the questionnaire and appropriate probes were utilized to elicit in-depth responses in each of the areas.

At points during the actual interview the interviewee was asked to speculate from his knowledge and experience with respect to a particular temporary system or with respect to temporary systems in general. In order to allow for this, the order of questioning differed slightly from

interview to interview.

The Pilot Study

The instrumentation for the study was pilot tested utilizing members of temporary systems other than those in the actual study sample. The pilot sample included 4 members of the Educational Administration Departmental Chairman Search Committee, 2 members of Project 3: Delivery of Educational Services to Prisons, and 1 full time member of the Department of Education Flexitime project.

Questionnaires and interviews were administered to this sample and the data reviewed with the intention of determining areas where the instrumentation and data collection techniques might be improved.

Fox (1969:66) defines a pilot study as:

...a miniature of some part of the actual study in which the intended instrument is administered to subjects drawn from the same population as the sample, but subjects who are not in the sample.

Fox (1969:66) claims that the pilot study generally has several purposes:

It may be designed to provide a trial run data-collection approach. It may be intended to test out the data-collection method or an instrument to see if it is in need of revision. It may be done to provide some pilot data to test out the data-analysis techniques planned. It may be intended to see if the subjects of the research can handle the data-collection instruments, or it may be intended to give the research staff experience...

The following outcomes resulted from the pilot study in this instance:

1. Changes were made to the questionnaire.

Specifically, directions given to respondents were revised to improve clarity, to delete redundant sections, and to change the format of certain sections.

2. The ordering of questions in the interview schedule, although flexible, was standardized to some degree.

4. The data collected were generally found to fit conceptually into the categories designed for analysis, i.e., Steiner's (1972) model of task group variables was deemed appropriate for analysis of temporary systems.

5. It was determined that the administration of the questionnaire followed directly by the interview was an appropriate and manageable strategy.

6. It was determined to give added weight to data collected during the interview relative to that collected utilizing the questionnaire.

Validity

Fox (1969) states that validity is the most important characteristic for any research procedure to possess. Validity is defined as: "...the extent to which the procedure actually accomplishes what it seeks to accomplish or measures what it seeks to measure" (Fox 1969:367).

A key type of validity with a study of this nature is content validity which requires that there be "...a rational, and ideally an empirical, basis to the selection of the actual content" (Fox 1969:370).

In this regard all of the questions included in the

questionnaire and interview schedule were developed directly from the literature pertaining to temporary systems and an attempt was made to be exhaustive in dealing with the topic. The two standardized instruments contained in the questionnaire, namely, the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire Short Form and the Group Atmosphere Scale, have both been successfully submitted to construct validation studies. Construct validity is a statistical extension of content validity and measures the extent to which a particular construct actually represents the reality one is trying to measure.

Validity of the study was also enhanced by collecting data from all members of each temporary system in question and by the interviewer's improved skill and increased knowledge of the subject area as a result of the pilot study.

The presence of the interviewer immediately following completion of the questionnaire allowed respondents to clarify the intent of difficult questions and, thus, improved the validity of the instrument.

Reliability

Reliability according to Gorden (1975:6):

...refers to the probability that an observation if repeated at a different time by the same person, or at the same time by another competent observer, will give the same result.

In this study reliability was improved through a number of means. All interviews were conducted by the same

interviewer to enhance consistency. Questionnaire data and interview data provided for a reliability cross check. Questions and answers in both the interview guide and questionnaire were carefully examined for consistency during the pilot study.

Data Collection Techniques

Interview and questionnaire data were collected from all members of each temporary system in question. Individuals were asked to fill out the questionnaire immediately prior to the interview. The initial stage of the interviews involved clarification of areas of the questionnaire which were of particular concern to the respondent.

All interviews were conducted privately, and in person, by the researcher. Interviews were tape recorded and subsequently transcribed. Analysis was done using the transcribed version.

Interview and questionnaire data were treated confidentially and reported anonymously. Additional data were extracted from appropriate documentation relating to each temporary system. These data related mainly to the historical setting and formal purposes of each temporary system.

Data were collected throughout the Province of Alberta over a six week period.

Data Presentation

Data are presented in the following chapters using Steiner's (1972) model for task group analysis as a conceptual framework. The model was reviewed in Chapter 2.

Within the task demands component were included the nature of the task, formal purposes, nature of the system, initial goal definition, and boundary maintenance. Resources included the knowledge, abilities, and tools possessed by temporary system members. Process consisted of the actual steps taken by the temporary system including time distortion, goal redefinition, role redefinition, communication patterns, and sentiments. Productivity concerns the result(s) achieved by a temporary system. Included in this category were policy recommendations, member satisfaction, relationship changes, personality changes, problem solutions and self renewal capacities.

ASSUMPTIONS

It was assumed that the instruments developed for the study would provide valid and reliable perceptions of respondents toward various aspects of temporary systems. Further, it was assumed that the instruments were exhaustive with respect to their measurement of the characteristics of temporary systems extracted from the literature.

It was also assumed that the five temporary systems selected for study were diverse enough to exhibit most characteristics of temporary systems, of this type.

LIMITATIONS

The study was limited by the reliability and validity of the instrumentation. The study was also limited by the nature of the definitions used and the availability of literature pertaining to temporary systems.

Another limitation was the degree to which findings from the study can be generalized to temporary systems other than those studied. For example, only temporary systems that began and ended since 1970 were considered. Also, the study was limited by the ability of respondents to recall events which occurred up to three years prior to the time of data collection.

DELIMITATIONS

The study was exploratory in nature. An important consideration in exploratory research is the depth of insight that can be obtained from various research designs. This study was delimited to five indepth case studies of discrete temporary systems.

Data were collected from all educators in the various systems in question and not from non-educators. This represents both a limitation and a delimitation.

In the interests of indepth analysis the study was delimited to two common types of temporary systems in education and did not examine other forms.

SUMMARY

The research design was presented in this chapter. The major research questions were stated as they had developed from the study purpose and tasks.

The nature of the study was discussed and support for case analysis as a suitable method for exploratory research was cited.

Methodology was discussed under the headings of sample selection, instrumentation, pilot study, validity, reliability, data collection techniques, and data presentation.

Stated in the final sections of the chapter were the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations under which the study was conducted.

Chapter 4

PPBES TASK FORCE

A descriptive analysis of the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Evaluation System (PPBES) Task Force is presented in this chapter. Following background information on the task force, the chapter is divided into four major sections, namely, task demands, resources, process and productivity. This conceptualization was developed by Steiner (1972) who claims that productivity is dependent upon the other three variables. A summary of findings forms the conclusion for the chapter.

BACKGROUND

The Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Evaluation System (PPBES) Task Force consisting of four full time members was established in mid-1970 by the Alberta Department of Education. The task force, a pure temporary system, was to explore the utility of PPBES as a method for meeting an increasing public demand for educational accountability (Alberta 1972:3). According to Riffel et al. (1972:3) the major objective of the task force was

...to develop a foundation for a system of making decisions about resource allocations for the purpose of assisting decision makers in providing a more efficient and effective learning environment for students.

A PPBE System contains four elements: goals, objectives, program structure, and an information base. According to Riffel et al. (1972:14) a goal, in the PPBES

context, is a statement of :

...broad direction, general purpose, or intent; it represents the desires of the organization's clients and gives direction to all facets of the organization's activities.

Objectives are derived from goals and are more specific in nature. The achievement of an objective should advance an organization toward its goal.

The program structure is based on a hierarchical arrangement of goals. The program refers to all an organization's activities which are designed to accomplish a specific goal. Riffel et al. (1972:15) define a program structure as:

...a classification plan for showing the logical arrangement of programs within an organization, indicating the connections between an organization's activities and their relationships to the organization's objectives.

Finally, the information base refers to data generated within the program structure and information about the environmental factors impinging on the organization. These data are determined by the requirements of decision makers.

Given the preceding, the meaning attached to the four components of the PPBE System can be defined. Paraphrased from Riffel et al. (1972): planning refers to the clarification and review of goals, objectives, and priorities; programming refers to the time phasing of plans and the development of activity schedules; budgeting refers to the identification of resources required to achieve the time-phased plan; and evaluation refers to the gathering of

information on program costs to assess the outcome of the program in relation to stated objectives.

The mandate given the PPBES Task Force was to develop and field test the program-accounting and budgeting portion of PPBES. The specific objectives of the task force were:

- (a) the standardization of the accounting system, namely, the classification and coding system;
- (b) the development of a program format for budgeting that will facilitate the identification of resource requirements with goal-oriented programs, including effectiveness indicators;
- (c) the up-dating and up-grading of current budgetary practices from a control-by-object type of budget to a program type of budget emphasizing responsibility and planning rather than fiscal control;
- (d) the improvement of local and provincial reporting systems by the establishment of resource allocation data bases;
- (e) the improvement of the analytic component at the school district and provincial levels;
- (f) the improvement of the planning process by the provision of internal and external cost data (Alberta 1972:3-4).

The present chapter contains information concerning the task force from its origin to the point of the actual field testing of PPBES in ten school jurisdictions. This provides a logical endpoint for the study of the task force, because, at this time, the developmental phase was relatively complete and the task force was restructured. This restructuring included the introduction of additional personnel whose major concern was implementation. In this chapter are contained data on the task demands, resources,

process and productivity that existed prior to the field testing.

TASK DEMANDS

Steiner (1972:7) claims that task demands include the requirements imposed on the group by the task itself or by the rules under which the task must be performed.

In the following analyses, information which relates to various task demands placed upon members of the PPBES Task Force is presented. These task demands resulted from the purposes the members perceived they had to achieve, the types of problems they had to solve, the clarity of the guidelines set for the task force, and the time limits under which the task force operated.

Purposes

The task demands in any group setting are, in part, generated by formally stated purposes but also arise from other purposes perceived to be important by the group members.

Table 4.1 illustrates the importance of various purposes as perceived by members of the PPBES Task Force. Mean scores were computed using the following scale: 5=extremely important purpose of the task force; 4=quite important purpose of the task force; 3=somewhat important purpose of the task force; 2=slightly important purpose of the task force; 1=a purpose not important to the task force. For purposes of interpretation means were rounded off to the nearest whole number.

Table 4.1

Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Importance of Task
Force Purposes

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. To accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time. | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4.25 | 4 |
| 2. To bring about a change in individual behavior. | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.75 | 4 |
| 3. To reeducate or retrain the members of the task force. | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2.75 | 4 |
| 4. To make plans to reeducate or retrain an individual or group outside the task force. | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.75 | 4 |
| 5. To provide members of the task force with new skills. | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2.75 | 4 |
| 6. To make plans to provide persons outside the task force with new skills. | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.50 | 4 |
| 7. To provide treatment for an individual or group. | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | ** | 2 |
| 8. To provide help to a larger organization. | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3.00 | 4 |

*5=extremely important; 4=quite important; 3=somewhat important; 2=slightly important; 1=not important.

**mean is not relevant in this instance.

Table 4.1 continued

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 9. To provide an opportunity for social interaction among the task force members. | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2.00 | 4 |
| 10. To provide direction for a larger organization. | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3.75 | 4 |
| *5=extremely important; 4=quite important; 3=somewhat important; 2=slightly important; 1=not important. | | | | | | | |

Purpose_1: to accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time. The data in Table 4.1 reveal that this purpose was considered "quite" important by the PPBES Task Force.

Purpose_2: to bring about a change in individual behavior. The data in Table 4.1 illustrate that this purpose was considered "extremely" important by members of the PPBES Task Force.

Purpose_3: to reeducate or retrain the members of the task force. The data in Table 4.1 show that this purpose was considered only "somewhat" important to members of the PPBES Task Force.

Purpose_4: to make plans to reeducate or retrain an individual or group outside the task force. The data in Table 4.1 show that this purpose was considered "extremely" important to members of the PPBES Task Force.

Purpose_5: to provide members of the task force with new skills. The data in Table 4.1 reveal that this purpose was considered only "somewhat" important by members of the PPBES Task Force.

Purpose_6: to make plans to provide persons outside the task force with new skills. The data contained in Table 4.1 suggest that this purpose was considered "quite" to "extremely" important by members of the PPBES Task Force.

Purpose_7: to provide treatment for an individual or group. The data in Table 4.1 suggest that this was not an appropriate purpose for the PPBES Task Force. Two-thirds of the members indicated that it was either not applicable or not appropriate.

Purpose_8: to provide services to help a larger organization. The data contained in Table 4.1 illustrate that this purpose was considered only "somewhat" important by members of the PPBES Task Force.

Purpose_9: to provide an opportunity for social interaction among the task force members. The data in Table 4.1 show that this purpose was rated only "slightly" important by members of the PPBES Task Force.

Purpose_10: to provide direction for a larger organization. The data in Table 4.1 reveal that this purpose was perceived to be "quite" important by members of the PPBES Task Force.

Several of the preceding purposes, which were extracted from the literature pertaining to temporary systems, were of

considerable importance to the PPBES Task Force. Specifically, purposes 2, 4, and 6 were considered extremely important and purposes 1 and 10 were considered quite important. This task force, therefore, has purposes that are consistent with those most commonly found in temporary systems.

In addition to the preceding purposes, several members of the PPBES Task Force expressed less formal purposes during unstructured portions of interviews. One member saw the task force purpose as providing answers to questions raised as a result of the "accountability movement" that was a political issue of the time. Another member expressed the opinion that although the mandate for the task force included only experimentation, members considered it their purpose to strongly advocate the acceptance of a PPBES scheme to all school boards and their employees. This idea was supported by another task force member who suggested that two previous attempts to install an accounting system had failed and that the mandate of the PPBES Task Force was, informally at least, beyond simple experimentation and included an effort to install the system.

Goal Acceptance

Table 4.2 contains a measure of the degree to which PPBES Task Force members accepted the formal goals of the task force. Mean scores were computed using the following scale: 5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. The data in Table 4.2 illustrate that the formal goals of

the task force were "always" accepted both explicitly and implicitly by the task force membership.

Table 4.2

Respondents' Perceptions of Goal Acceptance
by PPBES Task Force Members

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. The formal goals of the task force were explicitly accepted. | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.00 | 4 |
| 2. The formal goals of the task force were implicitly accepted. | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.75 | 4 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

Clarity of Guidelines

Another task demand relates to the clarity of guidelines established for and by the task force members. Table 4.3 contains information relating to this issue. Data in Table 4.3 suggest that the clarity of guidelines differed considerably from member to member. However, the guidelines were "often" seen as complex and in need of clarification by the membership of the task force.

Nature of Task

This complexity of guidelines is conceptually related to the type of problems with which the task force members were asked to deal. Table 4.4. contains information

Table 4.3

Respondents' Percepticns Regarding the Nature of the
Guidelines for the PPBES Task Force

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. The guidelines were clear to the members from the beginning. | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3.00 | 4 |
| 2. The guidelines for the task force were ccomplex and had to be clarified by the members. | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3.50 | 4 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

pertinent to the nature of the problems and tasks with which members of the PPBES Task Force were asked to deal. The data in Table 4.4 illustrate that task force members were "occasionally" asked to deal with routine tasks or problems but were "often" asked to deal with complex tasks or problems. This finding is in accordance with the claim made in the literature that temporary systems are often used to deal with complex tasks and nonroutine problems.

Time Limits

The final task demand relates to the time limits placed on the task or project. In this regard, Table 4.5 illustrates that members of the task force were "often" aware of the time limits placed on the project.

In response to an open-ended interview question regarding time limits, all four task force members expressed that they were constantly aware of time constraints on the

Table 4.4

Respondents' Perceptions of the Types of
Tasks or Problems Dealt With
by the PPBES Task Force

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were asked to deal with routine tasks or problems. | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2.75 | 4 |
| 2. Members of the task force were asked to deal with complex tasks or problems. | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.25 | 4 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

Table 4.5

Respondents' Awareness of
Project Time Limits

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were aware of the time limits placed on the project. | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4.25 | 4 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

project, but that the overall effect was increased productivity. None of the members felt that expansion of the time guidelines would have made any appreciable improvement in the final product.

RESOURCES

Steiner (1972:7) claims that resources:

...include all the relevant knowledge, abilities, skills, or tools possessed by the individuals who [are] attempting to perform the task...this determinant of productivity also includes the distribution of relevant resources among group members.

This section of the chapter examines the resources possessed by the PPBES Task Force. In addition to task force size, the resources include personal characteristics of task force members, such as experience, formal education, task orientation, and adaptability. Other resources include available leadership, information access, and financial support.

The Membership

The PPBES Task Force consisted of five persons, four working on a full-time basis and an outside accounting consultant who worked periodically with the task force during its existence. During the implementation phase of the project, two additional members joined the task force. As this study only examines the developmental phase of the task force work, the latter two members were not part of the population studied. The four full-time members who constituted the initial task force constitute the population for the study. These four task force members represented a highly educated group. All four had obtained a Master's degree prior to joining the task force and one member had earned a doctorate.

Two task force members had between eleven and fifteen years experience as professional educators, while the other two had less than five years. With the exception of the director, none of the members had previously served on a task force.

During interview sessions members were asked to comment on the appropriateness of the task force in terms of size and mix of persons. All persons, in retrospect, felt that the size was appropriate for the task, although three of the four felt that there were times when additional manpower could have been utilized. All members suggested that the size of the task force aided in communication among members and this was deemed important in a developmental project.

With respect to the mix of people, all members felt, on a personal level, that the group was compatible. It was felt by all that the econometric skills possessed by one member were not necessary nor utilized. The appointment of a person with an economic background to supplement the others with educational backgrounds was seen by two members as "political."

Task force members' concern for the task, or task orientation, is illustrated in Table 4.6. These data reveal that task force members perceived themselves to be "always" concerned about task accomplishment.

Within the interview situation all task force members chose to comment on the high task orientation of the group. One member stated: "Task force members have to be task-

Table 4.6

Respondents' Percepticns of PPBES Task Force
Members' Task Orientation

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were concerned about task accomplishment. | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.00 | 4 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

oriented. It is a necessity. We were task-oriented as a group."

According to the literature, adaptability is an important feature of temporary systems. The degree to which this exists depends in part on the adaptability of individual members. Table 4.7 provides information in this regard. The data contained in the table illustrate that members of the task force considered themselves "often" to be adaptable and flexible.

Another resource available to the task force was formal leadership. Table 4.8 contains data which illustrate the task force members' awareness of the established leadership. These data show that task force members were "always" aware of the leadership that was established when the task force was created.

Table 4.7

Respondents' Perceptions of PPBES Task Force
Adaptability and Flexibility

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were adaptable with respect to change. | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3.75 | 4 |
| 2. Members of the task force were flexible and willing to change direction. | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3.75 | 4 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

Table 4.8

Respondents' Perceptions of the
Establishment of Leadership

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|-----|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Leadership in the task force was established when the task force was created. | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0** | 5.00 | 3 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |
| **data were not collected from the director (formal leader) of the task force. | | | | | | | |

Information Access

The access to information of various types is an important resource to any task group. Table 4.9 contains data which illustrate the task force members' perceptions

with respect to information sources available to the task force. This table shows that at a decision point accurate and adequate information was "often" provided. The sources for this information were "occasionally" the parent organization (Department of Education), "often" groups and individuals outside the parent organization, and "often" from the expertise of task force members. This expertise was derived from prior knowledge, plus knowledge gained during the project. The director was hired several months prior to the formation of the task force to become familiar with the area and to conceptually outline the project. Task force members were given three weeks at the outset to read and develop their own understanding of the PPBES concept.

Table 4.9 also illustrates that "seldom" was too much information provided for task force members. The information overload often associated in the literature with temporary systems did not appear to be the case with the PPBES Task Force. In fact, data contained in Table 4.9 illustrate that "occasionally" too little information was provided for members of the task force.

Two task force members in an interview situation claimed information was made available to task force members without their having to go through the normal bureaucratic channels of the Department of Education. The task force was responsible to the Deputy Minister and, thus, had direct access to the top of the organization. This facilitated information access to a degree. On the other hand, however,

Table 4.9

Respondents' Perceptions of the
Amounts and Sources of Information
Available to the FPBES Task Force

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Accurate and adequate information was provided for all members of the task force when a decision was to be made. | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.25 | 4 |
| 2. The parent organization provided information for the task force. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3.00 | 4 |
| 3. Groups and individuals outside the parent organization provided information for the task force. | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.25 | 4 |
| 4. Information was derived from the expertise of members within the task force. | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.25 | 4 |
| 5. Too much information was provided for members of the task force. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 2.00 | 4 |
| 6. Too little information was provided for members of the task force. | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2.75 | 4 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

this direct access was not always thought of kindly by other members of the Department, particularly by those with presumed "seniority" over the task force members. This may have hampered access by task force members to information held in the middle ranks of the Department.

Funding

The PPBES Task Force was provided with ample funding for the project. The task force had high priority and received the funding normally accorded to such projects.

Beyond funding, the task force had another resource that all members of the task force considered very important. That resource was commonly referred to as executive commitment. The priority accorded to the project and the direct commitment from the top of the organization, i.e., the Department of Education, were considered key factors in the eventual outcome of the project.

PROCESS

Steiner (1972:8) claims process consists of the steps taken by a group when confronted by a task:

It includes all those intrapersonal and interpersonal actions by which people transform their resources into a product, and all those nonproductive actions that are prompted by frustration, competing motivations, or inadequate understanding.

The task group actions or processes examined in the following pages include decision making procedures, status relationships, communication patterns, energy expenditure, dysfunctional process, and group atmosphere of the task force.

Decision Making

Decision making procedures represent a key variable in all organizational literature. Table 4.10 contains data which illustrate decision making patterns within the PPBES

Task Force. These data illustrate that broad policy decisions were "always" made outside the task force but other decisions were "always" made within the task force. "Occasionally" these decisions were checked with someone outside the task force before action was taken. In light of the response pattern to item 3 on Table 4.10, it appears that some members of the task force were not aware of the number of decisions checked with outside persons before action occurred.

Data in Table 4.10 also illustrate that teamwork was "often" encouraged during the decision-making process and that members "always" participated in decision making.

Status Relationships

Table 4.11 contains data pertaining to the status relationships among members of the PPBES Task Force. These data illustrate that members of the task force perceived that they "often" had equal status in the task force and that "often" different leaders emerged depending upon conditions in the task force. This finding supports the literature which suggests that equal status relationships tend to develop in temporary systems. Also, the tendency for leadership to emerge in a temporary system receives support. The data also suggest that a noticeable hierarchy "occasionally" existed within the task force. This appears to contradict the data concerning equal status relationships but may result from the strong leadership that was established when the task force was created (see Table 4.8).

Table 4.10

Respondents' Perceptions of Decision Making
Strategies within the PPBES Task Force

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Decisions were made for the task force by someone outside the task force. | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2.50 | 4 |
| 2. Broad policy decisions were made outside the task force but more specific decisions were made within the task force. | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.50 | 4 |
| 3. Decisions were made within a prescribed framework by the task force but were usually checked with someone outside the task force before action. | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3.25 | 4 |
| 4. All members of the task force participated in decisions. | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.50 | 4 |
| 5. The decision making process in the task force encouraged teamwork. | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.25 | 4 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

However, no firm conclusion can be formed based on these data.

Communication

In an interview setting all members of the PPBES Task Force were asked to describe the communication among task force members. They were probed to discuss the openness and

Table 4.11

Respondents' Perceptions of Status Relationships,
Emerging Leadership, and Noticeable Hierarchy
within the PPBES Task Force

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force, including leaders, had equal status in the task force. | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.00 | 4 |
| 2. Different leaders emerged depending upon conditions in the task force. | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3.75 | 4 |
| 3. There was a noticeable hierarchy within the task force. | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 3.00 | 4 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

effectiveness of this communication.

All members expressed the view that communication was extremely open. The following quotations illustrate the extent of this openness:

There were no problems expressing true feelings with each other.

You couldn't help but communicate. You knew how the other person felt.

There was really no problem in communicating with each other. The problem may have been in gaining some consensus of agreement.

We used to do a lot of arguing, fighting with other members of the task force, but it never carried over. We would go hammer and tongs over something, disagreeing on a theoretical point of view, then go for coffee. There was never any hard feelings carried over.

The group was very closely knit. The project was not a popular one and, thus, members were brought together. Any more communication would have been dysfunctional.

Members of the task force were also questioned with respect to communication between the task force and outside agencies. Three of four members expressed the view that communication with the Department of Education, at various levels, was not good. A number of possible causes for this were stated:

We often didn't take the time to communicate with Department members...we got everything we wanted and had support from the top.

One target group with the Department of Education... we really, in part, replaced. So, they felt threatened...we bypassed the whole bureaucracy.

They [some persons in the Department of Education] became very insecure, of course. We were very suspect. Part of our role was to tap their brains, so to speak, and at the same time try to convert them, take them along with us. That wasn't successful. One of the criticisms was that our communication with them was mere tokenism, at best. That was a problem we never really solved.

...there wasn't a lot of communication, we were sort of an isolated group in that sense.

...our motives were misunderstood by some people within our own Department.

This poor communication with the Department of Education supports the claim made in the literature that temporary systems often experience "linkage failure" with respect to the parent organization.

The task force membership generally felt that communication was better, in fact, quite good, with most

school systems with which they worked. However, some communication problems existed in this regard also. The following quotations illustrate some of these problems:

We were talking to educators about an area in which they were not expert. Our credibility was not always high.

...we had different problems with different systems, sometimes depending upon the personalities. Occasionally we got someone in as one of our ten pilot systems that really didn't agree with what we were doing.

Again, some "linkage problems" were evidenced between the task force and outside agencies.

Energy Expenditure

The literature suggests that persons tend to expend more energy as members of a temporary system than in a regular work setting. Table 4.12 contains data which support this claim. The data suggest that members "often" or "always" expended more energy as a member of the PPBES Task Force than under most other working conditions.

Dysfunctional Process

According to the literature (Miles 1964) members of temporary systems tend to engage in unrealistic goal setting. Table 4.13 contains data which show respondents' perceptions of the degree to which unrealistic goal setting occurred in the PPBES Task Force. According to these data, members of the task force felt that they "occasionally" tended to set goals for themselves which were unrealistic. These data do not provide conclusive evidence for or against the setting of unrealistic goals within the PPBES Task

Table 4.12

Respondents' Perceptions of Energy Expenditure in the PPBES Task Force

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. More energy was expended as a member of the task force than in most other working conditions. | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.50 | 4 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

Table 4.13

Respondents' Perceptions of Unrealistic Goal Setting in the PPBES Task Force

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force tended to set goals for the system that were unrealistic. | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 3.00 | 4 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

Force.

Another dysfunctional process suggested in the literature (Janis 1972) for cohesive task groups like the PPBES Task Force is the "groupthink" phenomenon. The symptoms of groupthink did not appear to be present in the PPBES Task Force. The only exception to this was the

occasional belief in the invulnerability of the task force: "...we got everything we wanted and had support from the top." This was the only statement that gave any indication of the presence of groupthink symptoms and the relationship was not strong in this case.

Group Atmosphere

The group atmosphere of a temporary system is an outgrowth of the process of the system and has direct impact on the productivity of the system. Group atmosphere in the PPBES Task Force was measured using Fiedler's (1967) Group Atmosphere Scale (GA). Table 4.14 contains data which provide a measure of this group atmosphere. Posthuma (1970) reports a median Group Atmosphere score for real-life groups of 65. Garland and O'Reilly (1976:18), in a study of schools, defined a "good group atmosphere school" as one which had a score of 69 or higher on the GA scale, while "a poor group atmosphere school" was defined as a school which had a score of 61 or less.

According to the data contained in Table 4.14 the group atmosphere of the PPBES Task Force could be considered good. Fiedler (1967:32) claims that the Group Atmosphere "...seems to provide a valid estimate in real-life groups which live and work together over an extended time."

PRODUCTIVITY

Productivity refers to the actual outcomes which result from task demands, resources and process. Productivity in the case of temporary systems, in general, and the PPBES

Table 4.14

Respondents' Perceptions of the Group Atmosphere
of the PPBES Task Force

| Frequency of Item Scores | | | | | | | | | | mean n | |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|--------|
| 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Friendly | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Unfriendly | 7.00 4 |
| 2. Accepting | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Rejecting | 6.75 4 |
| 3. Satisfying | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Frustrating | 6.00 4 |
| 4. Enthusiastic | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Unenthusiastic | 7.00 4 |
| 5. Productive | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Nonproductive | 7.00 4 |
| 6. Warm | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Cold | 6.75 4 |
| 7. Cooperative | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Uncooperative | 7.00 4 |
| 8. Supportive | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Hostile | 7.00 4 |
| 9. Interesting | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Boring | 7.50 4 |
| 10. Successful | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Unsuccessful | 6.50 4 |
| TOTAL | | | | | | | | | | 68.50 | |

Task Force, in particular, includes task accomplishment, i.e., the degree to which purposes were achieved, and member satisfaction. Less direct outcomes of a temporary system could include effects on the system members, such as career pattern changes, job security, and professional growth. This section of the chapter examines the productivity of the PPBES Task Force.

Achievement of Purposes

The degree of achievement of the formal purposes of the PPBES Task Force (see the first section of this chapter) was examined by Riffel et al. (1972). Their conclusions were:

In summation, there are two main points. First, in a product sense, the IAB Project [PPBES Task Force] has resulted in tangible materials which represent a commendable achievement. The approach taken to PAB is basically sound and should be adaptable to most school systems in the province with a minimum of difficulty.

Second, while considerable product success was achieved, success with the processes of innovation seemed to be somewhat less. Most of the shortcomings of efforts in this regard are understandable: however, a good many of them might have been avoided (Riffel et al. 1972:58-59).

Of more importance in the present study is the degree to which the PPBES Task Force achieved purposes which were deemed important by the task force membership. Table 4.15 contains data which illustrate the degree of achievement of the "extremely" important and "quite" important purposes of the PPBES Task Force. These data illustrate that the membership perceived that the task force "fully" achieved its major task in a prespecified amount of time. This finding is compatible with the findings of the Riffel et al. (1972) report.

The data in Table 4.15 also illustrate the "partial" achievement of other purposes, i.e., bringing about a change in individual behavior, and making plans to reeducate, retrain or provide new skills for individuals or groups outside the task force.

These findings are interpreted as showing that task force members felt their purposes were, for the most part, achieved and that they perceived the task force to be quite successful in its efforts.

Members were asked if they felt the PPBES Task Force was more effective in achieving its purposes than a regular hierarchical organization, i.e., the Department of Education, might have been. All members of the task force

Table 4.15

Respondents' Perceptions of the Degree of Achievement
of Important Purposes of the PPBES Task Force

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. To bring about a change in individual behavior. | 0 | 4 | 0 | 2.00 | 4 |
| 2. To make plans to reeducate or retrain an individual or group outside the task force. | 0 | 4 | 0 | 2.00 | 4 |
| 3. To make plans to provide persons outside the task force with new skills. | 0 | 4 | 0 | 2.50 | 4 |
| 4. To accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time. | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2.50 | 4 |
| 5. To provide direction for a larger organization. | 1 | 3 | 0 | 2.25 | 4 |

*3=fully achieved; 2=partially achieved; 1=not achieved.

clearly stated that the task could not have been completed with the same success if it had been attempted by persons working in a regular hierarchical position. Reasons given were:

...the kind of temporary system we had, reporting to the minister,...made it possible for us to accomplish what we did. Simply because the clout was there.

It required major changes and the kind of commitment the regular hierarchy is not prepared to make. Two previous attempts in the regular hierarchy had failed.

I think it was very clear to us that that was all we were responsible for. We didn't have to concern ourselves about the operation of the rest of the Department.

Satisfaction

Theorists (see Steers 1975) suggest that members' satisfaction can be considered a product or outcome of an organization. Satisfaction is claimed by Bennis (1966) to be an outcome of most temporary systems.

Table 4.16 contains data which illustrate the degree of satisfaction that existed for members of the PPBES Task Force. A revised version of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss et al. 1967) (short form) was utilized to obtain this data.

Due to the small n, these data cannot be statistically analysed for significant differences. However, because all members of the task force were surveyed some trends are worthy of note. Data in Table 4.16 illustrate that differences may have existed in the way policies were put into practice in the PPBES Task Force and in regular hierarchical organizations. Job security was a notable concern of task force members. This trend is examined in more detail later in this chapter. Also, supervision, on both the technical and human relations dimensions, appeared more satisfactory in the task force setting than in members' regular hierarchical positions. These trends are worthy of future empirical study.

In terms of general satisfaction the task force members

Table 4.16

Respondents' Satisfaction within PPBES Task Force
and in Regular Work Situation

| SCALE | REGULAR WORK | | TASK FORCE | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|------|------------|--------|
| | sum | mean | sum | mean |
| 1. Ability utilization | 18 | 4.50 | 17 | 4.25 |
| 2. Achievement | 14 | 3.50 | 18 | 4.50 |
| 3. Activity | 20 | 5.00 | 19 | 4.75 |
| 4. Advancement | 16 | 4.00 | 15 | 3.75 |
| 5. Authority | 19 | 4.75 | 16 | 4.00 |
| 6. Policies and practices | 13 | 3.25 | 17 | 4.25 * |
| 7. Compensation | 16 | 4.00 | 14 | 3.50 |
| 8. Co-workers | 17 | 4.25 | 20 | 5.00 |
| 9. Creativity | 16 | 4.00 | 17 | 4.25 |
| 10. Independence | 15 | 3.75 | 15 | 3.75 |
| 11. Moral values | 16 | 4.00 | 15 | 3.75 |
| 12. Recognition | 16 | 4.00 | 17 | 4.25 |
| 13. Responsibility | 16 | 4.00 | 16 | 4.00 |
| 14. Security | 16 | 4.00 | 12 | 3.00 * |
| 15. Social service | 17 | 4.25 | 17 | 4.25 |
| 16. Social status | 18 | 4.50 | 20 | 5.00 |
| 17. Supervision- human relations | 13 | 3.25 | 18 | 4.50 * |
| 18. Supervision- technical | 15 | 3.75 | 19 | 4.75 * |
| 19. Variety | 16 | 4.00 | 19 | 4.75 |
| 20. Working conditions | 15 | 3.75 | 17 | 4.25 |
| 21. General satisfaction | 322 | 4.03 | 338 | 4.23 |

5=very satisfied; 4=satisfied; 3=neutral; 2=dissatisfied;
1=very dissatisfied:

*=trend

were "satisfied" with their jobs in both the task force and permanent settings.

Personal Outcomes

As was noted in the previous section, task force members tended to have some concern over job security. Table 4.18 illustrates the extent of this concern. The data in this Table indicate that task force members were "often"

concerned about job security.

Table 4.17

Respondents' Concern Over
Job Security

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were concerned about job security following completion of the task. | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4.00 | 4 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

This concern was also reflected in most members' responses in the interview setting. For example:

To me that's one of the major problems. The kind of temporary task force where you serve for a short period of time and then go back to your own work, doesn't create a problem. Here we were all brought in, except one... Played a lot of havoc. ...caused some bad feelings.

...people were trying to create new jobs and new positions for themselves and our task force sort of broke down before we were officially terminated, by people opting out.

There was anxiety.

For myself, and certain other task force members there was a great deal of uncertainty relative to the future.... It was something you had to live with.

These interview data suggest that concern about job security could be dysfunctional to the work of the task force.

One member of the task force expressed little concern

about job security. The others were quite definite in stating it as a concern.

Another outcome of the task force relates to the impact of the experience on individuals' career patterns. Members of the task force were asked if their membership on the task force had any impact on their subsequent career pattern. All members felt that participation in the task force positively affected their subsequent career patterns. Reasons given for this were increased visibility, improved process and technical skills, and heightened credibility.

Two respondents suggested that, because of the independence, the task force mode gives one the opportunity to succeed or fail at a project. This opportunity is not often afforded members of a structured hierarchy.

The final product or outcome of the PPBES Task Force was professional growth on the part of the membership. All members of the task force stated that they had developed professionally as a result of their experience. This development was in both the understanding of the content of PPBES, as well as in process skills.

SUMMARY

A brief background to the PPBES Task Force was presented in the chapter. The major objective of the task force was:

...to develop a foundation for a system of making decisions about resource allocations for the purpose of assisting decision makers in providing a more efficient and effective learning environment for students. (Riffel et al. 1972:3)

The specific objectives for the task force were also stated.

The following TASK DEMANDS which were placed on the task force membership were examined.

Purposes

Three purposes of the PFBES Task Force were found to be extremely important to the membership. These purposes were: to bring about a change in individual behavior; to make plans to reeducate or retrain an individual or group outside the task force; and to make plans to provide persons outside the task force with new skills. Two other purposes were found to be quite important to the membership. These were: to accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time; and to provide direction for a larger organization.

Goal Acceptance

The formal goals of the task force were "always" found acceptable, both explicitly and implicitly by the task force membership.

Clarity of Guidelines

The clarity of guidelines for the task force differed considerably from member to member. However, the guidelines were "often" seen as complex and in need of clarification.

Nature of the Task

Task force members were "occasionally" asked to deal with routine tasks or problems but were "often" asked to deal with complex tasks or problems. Claims in the literature suggest temporary systems are most appropriate

for dealing with complex tasks and nonroutine problems.

Time Limits

Members of the FPBES Task Force were "often" aware of the time limits placed on the project and felt that the overall effect was increased productivity. None of the members felt that expansion of the time guidelines would have made any appreciable improvement in the final product.

Following this examination of task demands the chapter contains the report of an investigation of the RESOURCES available to the task force. These resources included membership characteristics, information access, and funding.

The Membership

The task force membership was a highly educated group with considerable experience within educational circles. The size of the task force and mix of persons was deemed appropriate for the task. There was some suggestion that a person with an economic background was not essential because these particular skills were not utilized in the completion of the task.

Task force members were "always" concerned about task accomplishment and were highly task oriented individuals. The membership also considered themselves "often" to be adaptable and flexible.

Formal leadership was established at the outset and task force members were "always" aware of it.

Information Access

Task force members stated that at a decision point, accurate and adequate information was "often" provided. The sources for this information were "occasionally" the parent organization (the Department of Education) "often" groups and individuals outside the parent organization, and "often" the source was the expertise of the task force members. Information was also made available to task force members without their having to go through the normal bureaucratic channels of the Department of Education.

The information overload which is often associated with temporary systems did not appear to be present in the PPBES Task Force.

Funding

The task force had high priority and received the funding normally accorded to such projects. In addition to sufficient funding the task force had executive commitment from the top of the parent organization (the Department of Education).

PROCESS variables were examined in the context of the PPBES Task Force. These included decision making procedures, status relationships, communication patterns, energy expenditure, dysfunctional process, and group atmosphere.

Decision Making

The task force exhibited considerable autonomy in decision making, however, many decisions were checked with outside persons before action occurred.

Status Relationships

As is claimed in the literature, equal status relationships did develop among the members of the PPBES Task Force. This occurred in spite of the strong leadership that was established when the task force was created.

Communication

Members of the task force reported that communication within the task force setting was open and effective. This was not always the case with respect to communication between the task force and outside agencies, particularly certain branches within the Department of Education. This poor communication supports the claim made in the literature that temporary systems often experience "linkage failure" with the parent organization.

Energy Expenditure

Respondents claimed that they "always" expended more energy in the task force setting than under most other working conditions.

Dysfunctional Process

Two possible dysfunctional aspects of temporary systems, i.e., unrealistic goal setting and groupthink, were not found to be present to any appreciable extent in the PPBES Task Force.

Group Atmosphere

The group atmosphere according to Fiedler's (1967) Group Atmosphere Scale was found to be good.

The final section of the chapter deals with

PRODUCTIVITY and investigates the achievement of purposes, member satisfaction, and additional personal outcomes for the membership.

Achievement of Purposes

The respondents perceived that the PPBES Task Force "fully" achieved its major task in a prespecified amount of time. Evidence of partial achievement of other purposes was also apparent.

Members also clearly stated that the task could not have been completed with the same success if it had been attempted by persons working in a regular hierarchical position.

Satisfaction

In terms of a general satisfaction level respondents appeared "satisfied" with their jobs in both the task force and regular permanent positions.

One of the satisfaction indicators, job security, was of considerable concern to task force members.

Personal Outcomes

Respondents felt that participation in the task force positively affected their career pattern. Reasons for this were increased visibility, improved process and technical skills, and heightened credibility.

Respondents also felt that professional growth resulted from participation in the PPBES Task Force.

Chapter 5

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL MATHEMATICS CONSORTIUM

In this chapter is presented a descriptive analysis of the Junior High School Mathematics Consortium (hereafter called the Consortium). Following background information on the task force, the chapter is divided into four major sections, namely, task demands, resources, process, and productivity. This conceptualization was developed by Steiner (1972) who claims that productivity is dependent upon the other three variables. A summary of findings forms the conclusion for the chapter.

BACKGROUND

According to Rideout (1977:1) the Consortium was a project in cooperative curriculum development which involved 20 Alberta school systems.

The major impetus in forming the Consortium came from the Edmonton Public School System. The purposes of the Consortium were articulated in a survey report carried out by the Lethbridge Regional Office of Education (1976:1):

1. to develop a program that provides more detail and structure than is contained in the Program of Studies;
2. to develop a greater specificity of objectives and to order these smaller, more specific objectives into teaching sequences;
3. to develop teaching materials that will cater more adequately to the broad range of student ability;
4. to develop resource materials for teacher and student use that incorporate audio-visual materials, concrete and manipulative materials,

and materials that introduce the elements of relevance, fun, and excitement into mathematics as a means of better motivating students to achieve;

5. to provide a structure in which teachers and supervisory staff from many systems can actually work at curriculum development and thereby gain expertise in areas such as knowledge of mathematics building, and teaching effectiveness;

6. to provide personnel in smaller systems with the opportunity to work with the larger school systems to profit from that expertise and thereby increase their own expertise.

The Consortium, an impure or collateral temporary system, was a two year project which was partially funded by the Alberta Department of Education, with additional funding contributed by member school systems. A formal agreement between the Minister of Education and the Consortium was signed on January 6, 1975. This agreement stated that the Department of Education was prepared to support the project for the period commencing January 6, 1975 and terminating December 31, 1976. The support was offered based on a number of criteria relating to project objectives, project priority, materials and evaluation procedures.

The object for study in this chapter is the eight member executive of the Junior High School Mathematics Consortium. The body operated as a task force which was responsible for the completion of the project.

According to Rideout (1977:12):

The executive members were elected for the duration of the project. Their function was to set the policy and act as the decision-making body for the general consortium membership. The executive consisted of the chairman from the coordinating member system, the liaison representative from the

Department of Education, the recording secretary, three representatives from the general membership, the official contact person between the coordinating member and the Department of Education and the Project coordinator who acted as an executive secretary.

The present chapter contains information concerning the operations of the Consortium Executive for the period of the formal contract which extended from January 6, 1975 to December 31, 1976.

Twenty school systems were involved in the Consortium and each of these had varying numbers of teachers, consultants and administrators participating.

TASK DEMANDS

Steiner (1972:7) claims that task demands include the requirements imposed on the group by the task itself or by the rules under which the task must be performed.

In the following analyses, information which relates to various task demands placed upon members of the Consortium Executive is presented. These task demands resulted from the purposes the members perceived they had to achieve, the types of problems they had to solve, the clarity of the guidelines set for the Consortium, and the time limits under which the task force operated.

Purposes

The task demands in any group setting are, in part, generated by formally stated purposes, but also arise from other purposes perceived to be important by the group members.

Table 5.1

Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Importance of Consortium Executive Purposes

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. To accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time. | 5 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.63 | 8 |
| 2. To bring about a change in individual behavior. | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3.00 | 8 |
| 3. To reeducate or retrain the members of the task force. | 0 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 2.38 | 8 |
| 4. To make plans to reeducate or retrain an individual or group outside the task force. | 1 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3.50 | 8 |
| 5. To provide members of the task force with new skills. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 3.13 | 8 |
| 6. To make plans to provide persons outside the task force with new skills. | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3.25 | 8 |
| 7. To provide treatment for an individual or group. | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2.63 | 8 |
| 8. To provide help to a larger organization. | 5 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4.00 | 8 |

*5=extremely important; 4=quite important; 3=somewhat important; 2=slightly important; 1=not important.

Table 5.1 illustrates the importance of various purposes as perceived by members of the Consortium Executive. Mean scores were computed using the following scale: 5=extremely important purpose of the Consortium; 4=quite important purpose of the Consortium ; 3=somewhat important purpose of the Consortium; 2=slightly important purpose of the Consortium; 1=a purpose not important to the Consortium.

Table 5.1 continued

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 9. To provide an opportunity for social interaction among the task force members. | 1 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 2.75 | 8 |
| 10. To provide direction for a larger organization. | 2 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.25 | 8 |
| *5=extremely important; 4=quite important; 3=somewhat important; 2=slightly important; 1=not important. | | | | | | | |

Purpose 1: to accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time. The data in Table 5.1 reveal that this purpose was considered "extremely" important by the Consortium members.

Purpose 2: to bring about a change in individual behavior. The data in Table 5.1 illustrate that this purpose

was considered "scmewhat" important by members of the Consortium. There appeared to be a wide range of opinion regarding the importance of this purpose.

Purpose_3: to reeducate or retrain the members of the task force. The data in Table 5.1 show that this purpose was considered "quite" important to members of the Consortium. This measure of importance was interpreted as applying to teachers working in the Consortium as well as executive members.

Purpose_4: to make plans to reducate or retrain an individual or group outside the task force. The data in Table 5.1 show that this purpose was considered "quite" important to members of the Ccnsortium.

Purpose_5: to provide members of the task force with new skills. The data in Table 5.1 reveal that this purpose was considered "somewhat" important by members of the Consortium.

Purpose_6: to make plans to provide persons outside the task force with new skills. The data contained in Table 5.1 suggest that this purpose was considered "somewhat" important by members of the Ccnsortium.

Purpose_7: to provide treatment for an individual or group. The data in Table 5.1 suggest that this was considered "somewhat" important, however, half the executive members felt the purpose was nct important with respect to the Consortium. Some confusion appeared to exist in interpreting this item and, thus, findings are treated

lightly.

Purpose_8: to provide services to help a larger organization. The data contained in Table 5.1 illustrate that this purpose was considered "quite" important by members of the Consortium.

Purpose_9: to provide an opportunity for social interaction among the task force members. The data in Table 5.1 show that this purpose was rated "somewhat" important by members of the Consortium.

Purpose_10: to provide direction for a larger organization. The data in Table 5.1 reveal that this purpose was perceived to be "quite" important by members of the Consortium.

Several of the preceding purposes, which were extracted from the literature pertaining to temporary systems, were of considerable importance to the Consortium. Specifically, Purpose 1 was considered "extremely" important and Purposes 8 and 10 were considered "quite" important. This task force, therefore, has purposes that are consistent with those most commonly found in temporary systems.

In addition to the preceding purposes, five of the eight executive members felt that less formal, but important, purposes existed within the Consortium. Two members felt that the involvement of teachers, particularly in small systems, was a key purpose of the Consortium. Three other members felt that the Consortium was an attempt to show the Department of Education that curriculum could be

developed successfully by school boards. It was felt by these persons that the Department did not provide guidance in the development of basic programs.

One member suggested that the purpose for involvement by the Department of Education in the project was to evaluate the consortium model as a method of curriculum development. To this member the Department did not appear concerned about the product and its future utility. Further support for this idea could be drawn from the source of funding for the project. The Planning and Research Branch provided funding, but no financial support came from the Curriculum Branch of the Department of Education.

Goal Acceptance

Table 5.2 contains a measure of the degree to which executive members perceived that the formal goals of the Consortium were accepted. Mean scores were computed using the following scale: 5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. The data in Table 5.2 illustrate that the formal goals of the task force were "often" implicitly accepted and almost "always" explicitly accepted.

Clarity of Guidelines

Another task demand relates to the clarity of guidelines established for and by the task members. Table 5.3 contains information relating to this issue. Data in Table 5.3 suggest that the clarity of guidelines for the Consortium were almost "always" clear to the executive from the beginning. "Occasionally" guidelines were perceived as

Table 5.2

Respondents' Perceptions of Goal Acceptance
by Consortium Executive Members

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. The formal goals of the task force were explicitly accepted. | 5 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4.50 | 8 |
| 2. The formal goals of the task force were implicitly accepted. | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4.25 | 8 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

Table 5.3

Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Nature of the
Guidelines for the Consortium Executive

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. The guidelines were clear to the members from the beginning. | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.50 | 8 |
| 2. The guidelines for the task force were complex and had to be clarified by the members. | 0 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 3.00 | 8 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

complex and in need of clarification by the membership.

Nature of the Task

Table 5.4 contains information pertinent to the nature of the problems and tasks with which members of the Consortium were asked to deal. The data in Table 5.4 illustrate that executive members were "often" asked to deal with routine tasks or problems, and were "occasionally" asked to deal with complex tasks or problems. This finding was not in support of the literature, which claims that successful temporary systems are most effective for dealing with nonroutine, as opposed to routine, problems.

Table 5.4

Respondents' Perceptions of the Types of
Tasks or Problems Dealt With
by the Consortium Executive

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were asked to deal with routine tasks or problems. | 0 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3.75 | 8 |
| 2. Members of the task force were asked to deal with complex tasks or problems. | 0 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3.38 | 8 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

Time Limits

A final task demand relates to the time limits placed on a task or project. In this regard, Table 5.5 illustrates that members of the Consortium were "always" aware of the time limits placed on the project.

Table 5.5
Respondents' Awareness of
Project Time Limits

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were aware of the time limits placed on the project. | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.00 | 8 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

This finding was validated by executive members' responses to an open-ended interview question regarding time limits placed on the Consortium. All members stated that they were aware of the time limits placed on them. Four of eight respondents expressed concern that the Consortium did not have as much time as they originally anticipated. This was due to "hassles" in negotiating the contract. As a result, the two year project did not officially begin until six months after the anticipated starting time. This shortage of time caused some unnecessary rushing during the final stages of the project.

Six of eight executive members felt that the time limits did improve the productivity of the Consortium and that, in general, time limits placed on a task force were positive factors in terms of demanding results.

RESOURCES

Steiner (1972:7) claims that resources:

...include all the relevant knowledge, abilities, skills or tools possessed by individuals who [are] attempting to perform the task... This determinant of productivity also includes the distribution of relevant resources among group members.

This section of the chapter examines the resources possessed by the Consortium. In addition to Consortium size, the resources include personal characteristics of executive members, such as experience, formal education, task orientation, and adaptability. Other resources include available leadership, information access, and financial support.

The Membership

The Consortium Executive consisted of eight male members, namely, the chairman from the coordinating member system (Edmonton Public School District), the liaison representative from the Department of Education, the recording secretary, three representatives from the general membership, the official contact person between the coordinating member and the Department of Education, and the project coordinator who acted as an executive secretary. Only the latter person served in a full-time capacity. This executive constituted the population for the study.

The executive members represented a well- educated group. The most advanced degrees held by the membership included two doctorates, three master's degrees and three bachelor's degrees. The group also had considerable experience as professional educators. Three members had over 20 years experience, one had between 16 and 20 years, two had between 11 and 15 years, and two had between 6 and 10 years experience.

Two of the members had no previous experience in a task force setting. Three members had served previously on more than five task forces. The other members had limited experience working in a task force mode.

During the interview all members were asked to comment on the appropriateness of the Consortium Executive in terms of size and mix of persons. All members felt that the general size was appropriate for the task. One person felt that the executive was an effective working-size group, but that all of the Consortium member systems were not represented. He attributed this to his belief that the Consortium was numerically and geographically too large. All members felt the balance of expertise on the executive was appropriate. The executive included central office administrators, curriculum consultants, supervisors and teachers. One member felt that a stronger representation from the teaching force could have influenced the direction taken by the executive.

Consortium members' concern for the task, or task

orientation is illustrated in Table 5.6. The data in this table reveal that executive members perceived themselves to be "always" concerned about task accomplishment. Within the interview setting all members stated that, due to time constraints, and because of the terms of the formal contract, all persons were required to be task oriented.

Table 5.6

Respondents' Perceptions of Consortium Executive
Members' Task Orientation

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were concerned about task accomplishment. | 6 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4.63 | 8 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

The ability of members of a temporary system to be adaptable and flexible is a key characteristic according to the literature. Table 5.7 provides information in this regard. The data contained in the table illustrate that members of the Consortium Executive considered that they were "often" adaptable and flexible.

Another resource available to the Consortium was formal leadership. Table 5.8 contains data which illustrate the executive members' awareness of the established leadership. The data show that task force members were "always" aware of

Table 5.7

Respondents' Perceptions of Consortium Executive
Adaptability and Flexibility

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were adaptable with respect to change. | 3 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.38 | 8 |
| 2. Members of the task force were flexible and willing to change direction. | 2 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4.13 | 8 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

Table 5.8

Respondents' Perceptions of the
Establishment of Leadership

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Leadership in the task force was established when the task force was created. | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.75 | 8 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

the leadership that was established when the task force was
created.

Information Access

The access to information of various types is an important resource to any task group. Table 5.9 contains data which illustrate the members' perceptions concerning information sources available to the Consortium. This table shows that at a decision point accurate and adequate information was "often" provided. The sources for this information were "often" the parent organization (Edmonton Public School System), "occasionally" groups and individuals outside the parent organization, and "often" the expertise of Consortium members.

Table 5.9 also illustrates that "seldom" was too much information provided for task force members. Information overload, which is often associated with temporary systems in the literature, did not occur with the Consortium Executive. The amount of information received appeared to be close to optimal because data contained in Table 5.9 also show that "seldom" was too little information provided for members.

Funding

The project was funded jointly by the Planning and Research Branch of the Department of Education and the participating member school systems. Once obtained, the funding appeared to be adequate, but initial "hassles" over finances between the original Consortium members and the Department of Education did cause some time delays and negative feelings on both sides. The eventual signing of the

Table 5.9

Respondents' Perceptions of the
Amounts and Sources of Information
Available to the Consortium Executive

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Accurate and adequate information was provided for all members of the task force when a decision was to be made. | 4 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 4.13 | 8 |
| 2. The parent organization provided information for the task force. | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 3.50 | 8 |
| 3. Groups and individuals outside the parent organization provided information for the task force. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 3.25 | 8 |
| 4. Information was derived from the expertise of members within the task force. | 1 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.13 | 8 |
| 5. Too much information was provided for members of the task force. | 0 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 2.13 | 8 |
| 6. Too little information was provided for members of the task force. | 0 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 2.13 | 8 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

formal contract did provide the financial stability
necessary to carry out the project.

PROCESS

The task group actions or processes examined in the following pages include decision making procedures, status relationships, communication patterns, energy expenditure, unrealistic goal setting, defensiveness, and group atmosphere of the Consortium.

Decision Making

Decision making procedures represent a key variable in much of the literature on organizations. Table 5.10 contains data which illustrate decision making patterns within the Consortium Executive. These data illustrate that "seldom" were decisions made for the Consortium by someone outside the executive and "seldom" were broad policy decisions made outside the executive. "Seldom" were decisions checked with someone outside the executive prior to action. All members "often" participated in decisions. The decision making process "often" encouraged teamwork.

Status Relationships

Table 5.11 contains data relating to the status relationships among members of the Consortium Executive. The data illustrate that members of the executive perceived that they "often" had equal status in the Consortium. They felt that "occasionally" different leaders emerged depending upon the conditions. Equal status relationships are claimed in the literature to be characteristic of temporary systems.

Members also felt that "occasionally" an hierarchy was noticeable within the Consortium. This may have related to

Table 5.10

Respondents' Perceptions of Decision Making Strategies within the Consortium Executive

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Decisions were made for the task force by someone outside the task force. | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2.00 | 8 |
| 2. Broad policy decisions were made outside the task force but more specific decisions were made within the task force. | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2.50 | 8 |
| 3. Decisions were made within a prescribed framework by the task force but were usually checked with someone outside the task force before action. | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2.25 | 8 |
| 4. All members of the task force participated in decisions. | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 3.50 | 8 |
| 5. The decision making process in the task force encouraged teamwork. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4.13 | 8 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

the fact that four executive members had been associated with the parent organization (Edmonton Public School District) and in the school system they represented various levels of the hierarchy.

Table 5.11

Respondents' Perceptions of Status Relationships,
Emerging Leadership, and Noticeable Hierarchy
within the Consortium Executive

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force, including leaders, had equal status in the task force. | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3.75 | 8 |
| 2. Different leaders emerged depending upon conditions in the task force. | 0 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 2.50 | 8 |
| 3. There was a noticeable hierarchy within the task force. | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3.13 | 8 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

Communication

In an interview setting all members of the Consortium Executive were asked to describe the communication among members. They were probed to discuss the openness and effectiveness of this communication.

Six members expressed the opinion that communication within the executive was good or excellent and that persons shared ideas openly. Typical was the following remark: "The executive was a very close group. They met as needed and debated concerns extensively."

Two executive members felt the communication within the executive was generally good, but that some problems arose because some systems and, thus, executive members, joined

later than others. This caused these persons to feel that they had not participated in some of the important decisions.

Members of the executive were also questioned with respect to communication between the executive and outside agencies, particularly the school systems involved and the Department of Education. All members felt that communication between the executive and the member systems was good. The involvement of teachers was noted by three members as a contributing factor to this good communication.

Executive members were not as unified in their perceptions of communication between the executive and the Department of Education. Half of the executive felt the communication with the Department of Education was very good. The following quotation is typical and illustrative of these responses: "We had a Department representative. That was good. We received cooperation from him and communication was very good."

The other half of the executive felt that communication with the Department of Education was "strained." The following example illustrates:

My opinion is that the Department of Education was not completely committed on the project. They resisted what was being done because they had not initiated it. They are still resisting, despite the fact that it involves two-thirds of the Junior Highs in the province. The Department still ignores the work being done.

Because of the mixed response it is not possible to assess what linkage failure may have existed between the

Consortium and the Department of Education.

Energy Expenditure

The literature suggests that persons tend to expend more energy as members of a temporary system than in a regular work setting. Table 5.12 contains data which provide some support for this claim. The data suggest that members "often" expended more energy as members of the Consortium Executive than under most other working conditions.

Table 5.12

Respondents' Perceptions of Energy
Expenditure in the Consortium Executive

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. More energy was expended as a member of the task force than in most other working conditions. | 1 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3.88 | 8 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

Dysfunctional Process

According to the literature (Miles 1964) members of temporary systems tend to engage in unrealistic goal setting. Table 5.13 contains data which show respondents' perceptions of the degree to which unrealistic goal setting occurred in the Consortium Executive. According to this data, members of the executive felt that they "seldom"

Table 5.13

Respondents' Perceptions of Unrealistic Goal
Setting in the Consortium Executive

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force tended to set goals for the system that were unrealistic. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 2.00 | 8 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

tended to set goals for the system that were unrealistic.

Another dysfunctional process suggested in the literature (Janis 1972) for cohesive task groups like the Consortium Executive is the "groupthink" phenomenon. The symptoms of groupthink did not appear to be present in the Consortium Executive.

Group Atmosphere

The group atmosphere of a temporary system is an outgrowth of the process of the system and has direct impact on the productivity of the system. Group atmosphere in the Consortium Executive was measured using Fiedler's (1967) Group Atmosphere Scale (GA). Table 5.14 contains data which provide a measure of this group atmosphere. Posthuma (1970) reports a median group atmosphere score for real-life groups of 65. Garland and O'Rielly (1976:18), in a study of schools, defined a "good group atmosphere school" as one which had a score of 69 or higher on the GA scale, while a "poor group atmosphere school" was defined as a school which

had a score of 61 or less.

Table 5.14
Respondents' Perceptions of the Group Atmosphere
of the Consortium Executive

| Frequency of Item Scores | | | | | | | | | | mean n | |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|--------|---|
| 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Friendly | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Unfriendly | 6.75 | 8 |
| 2. Accepting | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Rejecting | 7.00 | 8 |
| 3. Satisfying | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Frustrating | 7.25 | 8 |
| 4. Enthusiastic | 5 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Unenthusiastic | 7.25 | 8 |
| 5. Productive | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Nonproductive | 7.75 | 8 |
| 6. Warm | 3 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Cold | 7.00 | 8 |
| 7. Cooperative | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Uncooperative | 7.25 | 8 |
| 8. Supportive | 4 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Hostile | 7.38 | 8 |
| 9. Interesting | 5 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Boring | 7.38 | 8 |
| 10. Successful | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Unsuccessful | 7.75 | 8 |
| TOTAL | | | | | | | | | | 72.51 | |

According to the data contained in Table 5.14 the group atmosphere of the Consortium Executive could be considered good.

PRODUCTIVITY

Productivity refers to the actual outcomes which result from task demands, resources and process. Productivity in the case of temporary systems, in general, and the Consortium Executive, in particular, includes task accomplishment, i.e., the degree to which purposes were achieved, and member satisfaction. Less direct outcomes of a temporary system could include effects on system members, such as career pattern changes, job security, and

professional growth.

This section of the chapter examines the productivity of the Consortium Executive.

Achievement of Purposes

The degree of achievement of the formal purposes of the Consortium, and Consortium Executive (see the first section of this chapter) was reported in the project report (Rideout 1977). In general, the achievement of purposes was summarized thus: "Through the cooperative efforts of the teachers of the twenty member systems a multi-faceted junior high mathematics program has been produced."

Of greater importance to the present study was the degree to which the Consortium achieved the purposes which were deemed important by the task force membership.

Table 5.15 contains data which illustrate the degree of achievement of the "extremely important" and "quite important" purposes of the Consortium Executive as perceived by the membership. These data suggest that the purpose to accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time was "fully achieved."

The data in Table 5.15 also illustrate the "partial" achievement of other purposes, i.e., providing direction and services to help a larger organization.

In general, members of the executive felt the Consortium purposes were achieved and it was a successful effort.

Members of the executive were asked if they felt the

Table 5.15

Respondents' Perceptions of the Degree of Achievement
of Important Purposes of the Consortium Executive

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. To accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time. | 6 | 2 | 0 | 2.75 | 8 |
| 2. To provide direction for a larger organization. | 3 | 5 | 0 | 2.38 | 8 |
| 3. To provide services to help a larger organization. | 3 | 4 | 0 | 2.43 | 7 |

*3=fully achieved; 2=partially achieved; 1=not achieved.

Consortium was more effective in achieving its purposes than a regular hierarchical organization, i.e., Department of Education, might have been. Six members felt the task accomplished could not have been completed as effectively by a regular hierarchical organization. Involvement seemed to be a key concern. For example:

Because of the nature of the Consortium we got a lot of publicity which we normally wouldn't. A lot of acceptance because teachers in many areas worked at it. ...I think an important thing is involving as many people as possible.

Two members felt that they could not judge whether or not the Consortium was more effective than a regular hierarchical organization might have been.

Satisfaction

Many theorists (see Steers 1975) state that member satisfaction can be considered a product or outcome of an organization. Satisfaction is claimed by Bennis (1966) to be an outcome of most temporary systems.

Table 5.16 contains data which illustrate the degree of satisfaction that existed for members of the Consortium Executive. A revised version of the Weiss et al. (1967) Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (short form) was utilized to obtain this data.

Due to the small n these data cannot be statistically analysed for significant differences, however, because all members of the Consortium Executive were surveyed some trends are worthy of note. Data in Table 5.16 illustrate that differences may exist in several variables between members' regular work and their work in the Consortium Executive. On four variables, namely, activity, advancement, independence, and security the Consortium Executive were "satisfied" in their regular work setting but only "neutral" in the task force setting. On two variables, namely, creativity and responsibility, the Consortium executive were "very satisfied" in the regular work setting and "satisfied" in the task force situation. These trends may be worthy of future empirical study.

Table 5.16 also illustrates that in terms of general satisfaction levels members of the Consortium Executive were satisfied in both the regular work and task force setting.

Table 5.16

Respondents' Satisfaction within Consortium Executive
and in Regular Work Situation

| SCALE | REGULAR WORK | | TASK FORCE | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|------|------------|--------|
| | sum | mean | sum | mean |
| 1. Ability utilization | 27 | 3.86 | 27 | 3.86 |
| 2. Achievement | 31 | 4.43 | 31 | 4.43 |
| 3. Activity | 28 | 4.00 | 24 | 3.43 * |
| 4. Advancement | 25 | 3.57 | 21 | 3.00 * |
| 5. Authority | 27 | 3.86 | 29 | 4.14 |
| 6. Policies and practices | 28 | 4.00 | 29 | 4.14 |
| 7. Compensation | 28 | 4.00 | 25 | 3.57 |
| 8. Co-workers | 30 | 4.29 | 30 | 4.29 |
| 9. Creativity | 32 | 4.57 | 27 | 3.86 * |
| 10. Independence | 29 | 4.14 | 21 | 3.00 * |
| 11. Moral values | 30 | 4.29 | 25 | 3.57 |
| 12. Recognition | 29 | 4.14 | 30 | 4.29 |
| 13. Responsibility | 33 | 4.71 | 29 | 4.14 * |
| 14. Security | 29 | 4.14 | 24 | 3.43 * |
| 15. Social service | 31 | 4.43 | 31 | 4.43 |
| 16. Social status | 29 | 4.14 | 31 | 4.43 |
| 17. Supervision- human relations | 31 | 4.43 | 27 | 3.86 |
| 18. Supervision- technical | 30 | 4.29 | 29 | 4.14 |
| 19. Variety | 31 | 4.43 | 29 | 4.14 |
| 20. Working conditions | 28 | 4.00 | 29 | 4.14 |
| 21. General satisfaction | 586 | 4.19 | 548 | 3.91 |

5=very satisfied; 4=satisfied; 3=neutral; 2=dissatisfied;
1=very dissatisfied:

*=trend

Personal Outcomes

Job security can be a major source of concern for members of time bound systems. This was not the case with members of the Consortium Executive. Table 5.17 illustrates that members were "seldom" or "never" concerned about job security. This finding was validated in the interview setting where no individual, when probed, expressed a

concern about job security as a member of the Consortium Executive.

Table 5.17
Respondents' Concern Over
Job Security

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were concerned about job security following completion of the task. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 1.50 | 8 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

Another outcome of any temporary system relates to the impact of the experience on an individual's career pattern. Members of the Consortium Executive were asked if their membership in the Consortium or any other task force had any impact on their subsequent career pattern. Five of eight members commented that membership in a task force can directly affect career pattern. Three members said they have personally changed their career pattern as a result of task force work. For example: "Often, task force work has led me into a job I've wanted, or have found out I wanted afterwards." Reasons given for career pattern changes resulting from task force work were increased visibility, improved process skills, and the "opportunity to prove

oneself."

Another outcome of the Consortium was professional growth of the membership. In an interview setting seven of eight executive members, when probed, commented that they had grown professionally as a result of their experience in the Consortium. Most of these conceded that this was common in all task forces in which they had worked. Two areas of professional growth were acknowledged, namely, curriculum knowledge and personal interaction skills.

SUMMARY

A brief background to the Junior High School Mathematics Consortium was presented in the chapter. Six general purposes of the Consortium were stated.

The following TASK DEMANDS which were placed on the Consortium Executive were examined.

Purposes

Executive members considered that it was extremely important to accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time. Two other purposes were considered "quite important." These purposes were: to provide services to help a larger organization; and to provide direction for a larger organization.

Goal Acceptance

The formal goals of the Consortium were "often" implicitly accepted and almost "always" explicitly accepted.

Clarity of Guidelines

Guidelines for the Consortium were almost "always" clear to executive members.

Nature of the Task

Executive members were "often" asked to deal with routine tasks or problems and were "occasionally" asked to deal with complex tasks or problems.

Time Limits

Members of the Consortium Executive were "always" aware of the time limits placed upon them. Six of eight executive members felt that the result of the time limits was improved productivity.

Following this examination of task demands the chapter contains an investigation of the RESOURCES available to the Consortium Executive. These resources included membership characteristics, information access and funding.

The Membership

The executive membership was a well-educated, highly experienced group consisting of eight members. The size of the Consortium Executive and mix of persons was deemed appropriate for the task. Executive members were "always" concerned about task accomplishment and considered themselves "often" to be adaptable and flexible. Formal leadership was established at the outset and members were "always" aware of it.

Information Access

At a decision point accurate and adequate information was "often" provided. The sources for this information were "often" the parent organization (Edmonton Public School District), "occasionally" groups and individuals outside the parent organization, and "often" the expertise of Consortium Executive members. Information overload was not a characteristic apparent to the executive.

Funding

Once obtained, the funding appeared to be adequate, however, initial problems in acquiring funds seemed to cause feelings of animosity to develop between Consortium Executive members and Department of Education officials.

PROCESS variables relating to the Consortium Executive were examined in the chapter. These included decision making procedures, status relationships, communication patterns, energy expenditure, dysfunctional process and group atmosphere.

Decision Making

The executive exercised considerable autonomy in decision making both in routine and broad policy decisions. All members "often" participated in decisions and this process "often" encouraged teamwork.

Status Relationships

Members of the executive perceived that they "often" had equal status in the Consortium, however, "occasionally" an hierarchy was apparent.

Communication

Communication was generally open and effective among executive members. Some problems arose because a few school systems were not involved in the initial planning.

Communication between the executive and member school systems was also good. Opinion was divided with respect to the quality of communication with the Department of Education. Half the members felt it was good, while the other half felt that it was strained.

Energy Expenditure

Respondents' claimed that they "often" expended more energy as a member of the Consortium Executive than under most other working conditions.

Dysfunctional Process

The Consortium "seldom" tended to set goals that were unrealistic. The Consortium Executive did not exhibit any of the characteristics of groupthink.

Group Atmosphere

The group atmosphere according to Fiedler's (1967) Group Atmosphere Scale was found to be good.

The final set of analyses presented in the chapter deals with PRODUCTIVITY. This includes the achievement of purposes, member satisfaction, and additional personal outcomes for the membership.

Achievement of Purposes

The respondents perceived that the Consortium Executive fully achieved their task in a prespecified amount of time. It was also concluded that the task could not have been completed as effectively by a regular hierarchical organization.

Evidence of partial achievement of other less important tasks was also apparent.

Satisfaction

In terms of the general satisfaction level the executive membership was satisfied in the Consortium setting as well as in their regular work settings. Some trends in specific satisfaction items were noted and appear worthy of further investigation.

Personal Outcomes

Five of eight executive members felt that participation in a task force could directly affect one's career pattern. Reasons given for this were increased visibility, improved process skills, and "the opportunity to prove oneself."

Two areas of professional growth were acknowledged to have occurred as a result of participation in the Consortium Executive. These were curriculum knowledge and personal interaction skills. Seven of eight members felt they had grown professionally as a result of their association with the Consortium.

Chapter 6

NORTHLAND STUDY GROUP

In this chapter a descriptive analysis of the Northland School Division Study Group (Study Group) is presented. Following background information on the Study Group, the chapter is divided into four major sections, namely, task demands, resources, process, and productivity. This conceptualization was developed by Steiner (1972) who claims that productivity is dependent upon the other variables. A summary of findings forms the conclusion for the chapter.

BACKGROUND

The Northland Study Group was an impure or collateral task force established by order of the Alberta Minister of Education in August, 1974. The task force was composed of three members and was appointed for a one year period. According to Swift et al. (1975:153), the purpose of the study group was to inquire and report upon certain matters as follows:

- (a) generally, to study and conduct an overall review and appraisal of the functions, administration, operation, and services of the Northland School Division No. 61;

- (b) in particular, to inquire into

- (i) the legal, legislative and administrative structure of the Division, and the effectiveness thereof;

- (ii) the financing of the Division's operations, including its manner of budgeting, the sources of its funds, and the expenditure thereof;

(iii) the educational program of the Division, including the nature of the facilities, ancillary services, and the effectiveness of the schools, having regard to the circumstances in which each operates;

(iv) the area and communities served by the Division, including consideration of the desirability of including territory not now served, or excluding territory now part of the Division;

(v) the nature and effectiveness of services supplied to the communities served by the Division by other governmental agencies as they relate to the provision of school services;

(vi) such other matters as in the opinion of the Committee relate to and bear upon the effectiveness of the operations and services of the Division.

In carrying out these purposes the Study Group completed a number of tasks. Each of the communities served by Northland School Division were visited. Three meetings were held with a six man Advisory and Consultative Committee which was established by the Minister. Public hearings were held as were interviews with individual trustees, chief officers of the board, and Department of Education officials. Visits were made to other school jurisdictions similar in nature to Northland. In addition, the Study Group initiated a number of studies relating to specific problems in Northland.

Data contained in this chapter were collected from the three members of the Northland Study Group by means of questionnaires and personal interviews with each.

TASK DEMANDS

Steiner (1972:7) claims that task demands include the requirements imposed upon the group by the task itself or by the rules under which the task must be performed.

In the following analyses, information which relates to various task demands placed upon members of the Northland Study Group is presented. These task demands resulted from the purposes members perceived they had to achieve, the types of problems they had to solve, the clarity of the guidelines set for the task force, and the time limits under which the task force operated.

Purposes

The task demands in any group setting are, in part, generated by formally stated purposes, but also arise from other purposes perceived to be important by the group members.

Table 6.1 illustrates the importance of various purposes as perceived by members of the Northland Study Group. Mean scores were computed using the following scale: 5=extremely important purpose of the Study Group; 4=quite important purpose of the Study Group; 3=somewhat important purpose of the Study Group; 2=slightly important purpose of the Study Group; 1=a purpose not important to the Study Group.

Purpose 1: to accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time. The data in Table 6.1 reveal that this purpose was considered "quite" important by the Study Group.

Table 6.1

Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Importance of Study
Group Purposes

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. To accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time. | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.33 | 3 |
| 2. To bring about a change in individual behavior. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2.33 | 3 |
| 3. To reeducate or retrain the members of the task force. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1.00 | 3 |
| 4. To make plans to reeducate or retrain an individual or group outside the task force. | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4.00 | 3 |
| 5. To provide members of the task force with new skills. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1.33 | 3 |
| 6. To make plans to provide persons outside the task force with new skills. | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3.67 | 3 |
| 7. To provide treatment for an individual or group. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2.33 | 3 |
| 8. To provide help to a larger organization. | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3.67 | 3 |

*5=extremely important; 4=quite important; 3=somewhat important; 2=slightly important; 1=not important.

Table 6.1 continued

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 9. To provide an opportunity for social interaction among the task force members. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1.00 | 3 |
| 10. To provide direction for a larger organization. | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.00 | 3 |
| *5=extremely important; 4=quite important; 3=somewhat important; 2=slightly important; 1=not important. | | | | | | | |

Purpose_2: to bring about a change in individual behavior. The data in Table 6.1 illustrate that this purpose was considered "scmewhat" important by the Study Group.

Purpose_3: to reeducate or retrain members of the task force. The data in Table 6.1 show that this purpose was not considered important by the Study Group.

Purpose_4: to make plans to reeducate or retrain an individual or group outside the task force. The data in Table 6.1 show that this purpose was considered "quite" important by the Study Group.

Purpose_5: to provide members of the task force with new skills. The data in Table 6.1 reveal that this purpose was not considered important by members of the Study Group.

Purpose_6: to make plans to provide persons outside the task force with new skills. The data contained in Table 6.1 suggest that this purpose was considered "quite" important

by the members of the Study Group.

Purpose 7: to provide treatment for an individual or group. The data in Table 6.1 suggest that this purpose was considered "somewhat" important by the Study Group.

Purpose 8: to provide services to help a larger organization. The data contained in Table 6.1 illustrate that this purpose was considered "quite" important by members of the Study Group.

Purpose 9: to provide an opportunity for social interaction among the task force members. The data in Table 6.1 show that this purpose was not considered important by members of the Study Group.

Purpose 10: to provide direction for a larger organization. The data in Table 6.1 reveal that this purpose was perceived to be "extremely" important by members of the Study Group.

Several of the preceding purposes, which were extracted from the literature pertaining to temporary systems, were of considerable importance to the Northland Study Group. Specifically, Purpose 10 was considered "extremely" important and Purposes 4, 6, and 8 were considered "quite" important by members of the Study Group.

In an interview setting none of the members of the Study Group felt there were any informal or hidden purposes for the task force. The mandate appeared straightforward to all members.

Goal Acceptance

Table 6.2 contains a measure of the degree to which Study Group members accepted the formal goals of the task force. Mean scores were computed using the following scale: 5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. The data in Table 6.2 illustrate that the formal goals of the Study Group were "always" implicitly accepted and "often" explicitly accepted by the membership.

Table 6.2
Respondents' Perceptions of Goal Acceptance
by Study Group Members

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. The formal goals of the task force were explicitly accepted. | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.33 | 3 |
| 2. The formal goals of the task force were implicitly accepted. | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.67 | 3 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

Clarity of Guidelines

Another task demand relates to the clarity of guidelines established for and by the task members. Table 6.3 contains data which relate to this issue. These data suggest that the guidelines were "always" clear to Study Group members. "Seldom" were these guidelines complex.

Table 6.3

Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Nature of the
Guidelines for the Study Group

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. The guidelines were clear to the members from the beginning. | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.67 | 3 |
| 2. The guidelines for the task force were complex and had to be clarified by the members. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2.33 | 3 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

Nature of the Task

Although guidelines may be clear, the type of problems with which a task force is asked to deal may be complex. Table 6.4 contains information pertinent to the nature of the problems and tasks dealt with by members of the Study Group. The data in Table 6.4 illustrate that Study Group members "seldom" had to deal with routine tasks or problems but "often" had to deal with complex tasks or problems. This is a common feature of temporary systems in the literature.

Time Limits

A key task demand relates to the time limits placed on a task group. In this regard, Table 6.5 illustrates that members of the Study Group were "always" aware of the time limits placed on the project.

In an interview situation all members of the Study Group expressed the view that the time available was

Table 6.4

Respondents' Perceptions of the Types of
Tasks or Problems Dealt With
by the Study Group

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were asked to deal with routine tasks or problems. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2.33 | 3 |
| 2. Members of the task force were asked to deal with complex tasks or problems. | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.33 | 3 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

Table 6.5

Respondents' Awareness of
Project Time Limits

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were aware of the time limits placed on the project. | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.00 | 3 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

reasonable in light of the task to be accomplished.

RESOURCES

This section of the chapter contains an examination of the resources possessed by Northland Study Group. In addition to task force size, the resources include personal characteristics of task force members, such as experience, formal education, task orientation and adaptability. Other resources include available leadership, information access, and financial support.

The Membership

The Northland Study Group consisted of three persons, one of whom acted as chairman and one as secretary. All members were experienced educators. Two members had over 20 years experience, while the other member had between 16 and 20 years experience. Only one of the Study Group members had previous experience in a task force setting. The Study Group members had attained a high level of formal education. Two members had received a doctorate and the third had obtained a master's degree prior to joining the Study Group.

In an interview setting members of the Study Group were asked to comment on the appropriateness of the task force in terms of size and mix of persons. All members of the Study Group felt that three persons was an appropriate number. Additional persons might have provided more diverse input but logistical problems with respect to the task would have increased as well. Members felt that the Advisory and Consultative Committee appointed by the Minister provided the diversity of viewpoint that was necessary.

All members felt that the mix of people in the Study Group collectively provided the experience, skills, and abilities necessary to successfully complete the task. The Advisory and Consultative Committee provided additional experiential input relating to the nature and problems of Northland School Division.

Study Group members' concern for task or task orientation is illustrated in Table 6.6. These data reveal that Study Group members perceived themselves to be "always" concerned about task accomplishment. This finding was validated by comments by all three members in an interview setting.

Table 6.6

Respondents' Perceptions of Study Group
Members' Task Orientation

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were concerned about task accomplishment. | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.00 | 3 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

According to the literature, adaptability is an important feature of temporary systems. The degree to which this exists depends in part on the adaptability of individual members. Table 6.7 provides information in this

regard. The data contained in the table illustrate that members of the Study Group considered themselves "often" to be adaptable and flexible.

Table 6.7

Respondents' Perceptions of Study Group
Adaptability and Flexibility

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were adaptable with respect to change. | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.33 | 3 |
| 2. Members of the task force were flexible and willing to change direction. | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.33 | 3 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

Another resource available to the task force was formal leadership. Table 6.8 contains data which illustrate that Study Group members were "always" aware of the established leadership.

Information Access

The access to information is an important resource to any task group. Table 6.9 contains data which illustrate the Study Group members' perceptions with respect to information sources available to the task force. These data show that at a decision point accurate and adequate information was "often" provided. The source for this information was

Table 6.8

Respondents' Perceptions of the
Establishment of Leadership

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Leadership in the task force was established when the task force was created. | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.00 | 3 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

"often" the parent organization (Department of Education),
"often" groups and individuals outside the parent
organization, and "often" the expertise of Study Group
members.

Table 6.9 also illustrates that "seldom" was too much
information provided for task force members. The information
overload often associated in the literature with temporary
systems did not appear to be the case with the Northland
Study Group. Data contained in Table 6.9 actually show that
"occasionally" too little information was provided for
members of the task force.

Funding

Sufficient funds were provided for the operation of the
Study Group. When the Study Group decided that every
community in Northland should be visited rather than a
selected sample, the necessary funding was provided. This
suggests the project had definite commitment both
philosophically and financially from the top levels of the

Table 6.9

Respondents' Perceptions of the
Amounts and Sources of Information
Available to the Study Group

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Accurate and adequate information was provided for all members of the task force when a decision was to be made. | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.33 | 3 |
| 2. The parent organization provided information for the task force. | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.33 | 3 |
| 3. Groups and individuals outside the parent organization provided information for the task force. | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.33 | 3 |
| 4. Information was derived from the expertise of members within the task force. | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.00 | 3 |
| 5. Too much information was provided for members of the task force. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2.33 | 3 |
| 6. Too little information was provided for members of the task force. | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2.67 | 3 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

Department of Education.

PROCESS

Steiner (1972:8) claims process consists of the steps taken by a group when confronted by a task. The task group processes examined in this section include decision making

procedures, status relationships, communication patterns, dysfunctional process, and group atmosphere.

Decision Making

Decision making procedures represent a key variable in the organizational literature. Table 6.10 contains data which illustrate decision making patterns within the Northland Study Group. These data illustrate that members of the Study Group "always" participated in decision making and that the decision making process "always" encouraged teamwork. "Seldom" were decisions made for the Study Group by someone outside the group and "seldom" were decisions checked with anyone outside the Study Group before action was taken.

Status Relationships

Table 6.11 contains data relating to the status relationships among members of the Northland Study Group. These data illustrate that members perceived that they "often" had equal status in the Study Group. Leadership was stable and "seldom" did different leaders emerge. The tendency for emergent leadership to occur in temporary systems was not evident in this case. The data in Table 6.11 also suggest that a noticeable hierarchy "often" existed within the task force. This would appear to result from the strong leadership that was established when the Study Group was created (see Table 6.8).

Table 6.10

Respondents' Perceptions of Decision Making
Strategies within the Study Group

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Decisions were made for the task force by someone outside the task force. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2.00 | 3 |
| 2. Broad policy decisions were made outside the task force but more specific decisions were made within the task force. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1.33 | 3 |
| 3. Decisions were made within a prescribed framework by the task force but were usually checked with someone outside the task force before action. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2.00 | 3 |
| 4. All members of the task force participated in decisions. | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.00 | 3 |
| 5. The decision making process in the task force encouraged teamwork. | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.00 | 3 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

Communication

In an interview setting all members of the Study Group were asked to describe the communication among task force members. They were probed to discuss the openness and effectiveness of this communication.

All members expressed the view that communication was

Table 6.11

Respondents' Perceptions of Status Relationships,
Emerging Leadership, and Noticeable Hierarchy
within the Study Group

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force, including leaders, had equal status in the task force. | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.33 | 3 |
| 2. Different leaders emerged depending upon conditions in the task force. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2.33 | 3 |
| 3. There was a noticeable hierarchy within the task force. | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3.67 | 3 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

good or excellent. The following quotation represents a typical response:

We all respected each other. We travelled a lot together. We had many hours to discuss all sorts of things. We talked about the work and problems of the task force. Some socializing but mostly task oriented discussion.

Members of the Study Group were also questioned with respect to communication between the task force and outside agencies. All members stated that communication with the Department of Education at all levels was very good. No evidence of linkage failure with the parent organization was evidenced. This good communication with the parent organization could be anticipated because of the prestige of one of the members (a former deputy minister) and the access

Dysfunctional Process

Miles (1964) claims that members of temporary systems tend to engage in unrealistic goal setting. Table 6.13 contains data which show respondents' perceptions of the degree to which unrealistic goal setting occurred in the Study Group. According to these data, members of the task force felt that they "occasionally" tended to set goals for themselves which were unrealistic.

Table 6.13

Respondents' Perceptions of Unrealistic Goal
Setting in the Study Group

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force tended to set goals for the system that were unrealistic. | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3.33 | 3 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

Janis (1972) claims a potential dysfunctional process for cohesive task groups is the "groupthink" phenomenon. The symptoms of groupthink did not appear to be present in the Northland Study Group.

Group Atmosphere

The group atmosphere of a temporary system is an outgrowth of the process of the system and has direct impact on the productivity of that system. Group Atmosphere in the

Northland Study Group was measured using Fiedler's (1967) Group Atmosphere Scale (GA). Table 6.14 contains data which provide a measure of this group atmosphere. Posthuma (1970) reports a median Group Atmosphere score of 65 for real-life groups. Garland and O'Reilly (1976:18) in a study of schools defined a "good group atmosphere school" as one which had a score of 69 or higher on the GA scale, while a "poor group atmosphere school" was defined as a school which had a score of 61 or less.

Table 6.14

Respondents' Perceptions of the Group Atmosphere
of the Study Group

| Frequency of Item Scores | | | | | | | | | | Mean | n |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|-------|---|
| | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | | |
| 1. Friendly | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Unfriendly | 7.00 | 3 |
| 2. Accepting | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Rejecting | 6.33 | 3 |
| 3. Satisfying | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Frustrating | 5.67 | 3 |
| 4. Enthusiastic | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Unenthusiastic | 6.67 | 3 |
| 5. Productive | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Nonproductive | 6.33 | 3 |
| 6. Warm | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Cold | 7.00 | 3 |
| 7. Cooperative | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Uncooperative | 7.33 | 3 |
| 8. Supportive | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Hostile | 7.00 | 3 |
| 9. Interesting | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Boring | 7.33 | 3 |
| 10. Successful | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Unsuccessful | 5.33 | 3 |
| TOTAL | | | | | | | | | | 66.00 | |

According to the data contained in Table 6.14 the group atmosphere could be considered less than good. Fiedler (1967:32) claims that the Group Atmosphere: "...seems to provide a valid estimate in real-life groups which live and

work together over an extended time." The reason for the less than good group atmosphere appeared to stem from members' concern over the way with which the recommendations of the study were dealt. This is examined in more depth in the section of this chapter dealing with productivity. The data in Table 6.14 suggest that members felt that the Study Group was somewhat unsuccessful, frustrating, nonproductive, and rejecting.

PRODUCTIVITY

Productivity refers to the actual outcomes which result from task demands, resources, and process. Productivity in the case of temporary systems, in general, and the Northland Study Group, in particular, includes task accomplishment, i.e., the degree to which purposes were achieved, and member satisfaction. Less direct outcomes of a temporary system could include effects on system members, such as career pattern changes, job security, and professional growth. This section of the chapter examines the productivity of the Northland Study Group.

Achievement of Purposes

The formal purposes of the Study Group were achieved. A report meeting all formal requirements (see the first section of this chapter) was submitted to the Minister of Education in July 1975. The Study Group appeared confident that the report had validity and comprehensiveness. Swift et al. (1975:4) state:

In mid-June after the drafting of this report was

well underway a final meeting was held at Peace River with the chairman and chief officers of the division for further discussions of a number of matters which required more information or explanation. It was of interest to discover at this meeting that a number of plans were under way, or that steps had already been taken, to move in the direction of some of the recommendations which were already in the draft of the report.

Of importance to the present study was the degree to which the Northland Study Group achieved the purposes which were deemed important by the task force membership. Table 6.15 contains data which illustrate the degree of achievement of the extremely important and quite important purposes of the Study Group as perceived by the membership. These data illustrate that the purpose "to provide direction for a larger organization" was only partially achieved. This was substantiated through responses of members in an interview setting. They felt that since the report had been completed few recommendations had been implemented by the Department of Education. The following quote is illustrative of the concern:

The report was submitted to the Minister and we received no feedback. We do not know what the Minister or Department of Education think about it. It [the report] may have had some impact but in significant areas the task force has had little effect.

This could account for the low scores in the Group Atmosphere Scale on items relating to productivity, success, acceptance, and satisfaction. This may have occurred because the instrument was administered a considerable time after the completion of the task. Two other purposes were only

partially achieved and appear linked to the preceding discussion as well. These were: to make plans to reeducate or retrain an individual or group outside the task force; and, to provide services to help a larger organization.

Table 6.15

Respondents' Perceptions of the Degree of Achievement of Important Purposes of the Study Group

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. To provide direction for a larger organization. | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2.33 | 3 |
| 2. To accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time. | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2.67 | 3 |
| 3. To make plans to reeducate or retrain an individual or group outside the task force. | 0 | 3 | 0 | 2.00 | 3 |
| 4. To provide services to help a larger organization. | 0 | 3 | 0 | 2.00 | 3 |
| *3=fully achieved; 2=partially achieved; 1=not achieved. | | | | | |

In terms of accomplishing a task in a prespecified amount of time, i.e., producing a report, the members felt this was fully achieved.

Members were asked if they felt the Study Group was more effective in achieving its purposes than a regular hierarchical organization, i.e., Department of Education,

might have been. All members felt that the project might have lacked credibility in the eyes of people in Northland if it were done completely within the Department of Education and, thus, would not have been as effective. Also, Departmental persons might have had less freedom to express certain viewpoints. The following quotation expresses the point well:

It would have been unfortunate if it had been Department of Education officials because there is a net of opinion of what is acceptable within the Department. As in any department there is a kind of conventional wisdom. Their ideas would have reflected that wisdom which is often a result of consensus within the Department.

Satisfaction

The satisfaction of members can be considered a product or outcome of an organization. Bennis (1966) claims that satisfaction is an outcome of most temporary systems. Table 6.16 contains data which illustrate the degree of satisfaction that existed for members of the Study Group.

Due to the small n these data cannot be statistically analysed for significant differences, however, because all members of the Study Group were surveyed trends are worthy of note. Member satisfaction levels were similar in regular work and task force settings. This was true on all subscales but one. Members of the Study Group were very satisfied with the way their colleagues got along with each other in the task force setting but were just satisfied with the same variable in their regular work setting.

In terms of the general satisfaction respondents were

Table 6.16

Respondents' Satisfaction within Study Group
and in Regular Work Situation

| SCALE | REGUIAR WORK | | TASK FORCE | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|------|------------|--------|
| | sum | mean | sum | mean |
| 1. Ability utilization | 13 | 4.33 | 13 | 4.33 |
| 2. Achievement | 13 | 4.33 | 11 | 3.67 |
| 3. Activity | 12 | 4.00 | 12 | 4.00 |
| 4. Advancement | 10 | 3.33 | 10 | 3.33 |
| 5. Authority | 12 | 4.00 | 11 | 3.67 |
| 6. Policies and practices | 10 | 3.33 | 10 | 3.33 |
| 7. Compensation | 12 | 4.00 | 12 | 4.00 |
| 8. Co-workers | 11 | 3.67 | 14 | 4.67 * |
| 9. Creativity | 13 | 4.33 | 11 | 3.67 |
| 10. Independence | 14 | 4.67 | 12 | 4.00 |
| 11. Moral values | 14 | 4.67 | 14 | 4.67 |
| 12. Recognition | 13 | 4.33 | 13 | 4.33 |
| 13. Responsibility | 13 | 4.33 | 13 | 4.33 |
| 14. Security | 11 | 3.67 | 10 | 3.33 |
| 15. Social service | 13 | 4.33 | 12 | 4.00 |
| 16. Social status | 11 | 3.67 | 12 | 4.00 |
| 17. Supervision- human relations | 13 | 4.33 | 12 | 4.00 |
| 18. Supervision- technical | 13 | 4.33 | 12 | 4.00 |
| 19. Variety | 13 | 4.33 | 13 | 4.33 |
| 20. Working conditions | 12 | 4.00 | 13 | 4.33 |
| 21. General satisfaction | 246 | 4.10 | 240 | 4.00 |

5=very satisfied; 4=satisfied; 3=neutral; 2=dissatisfied;
1=very dissatisfied:

*=trend

satisfied in both the regular work and task force settings.

Personal Outcomes

One outcome of temporary systems relates to job security. Table 6.17 illustrates that members of the Study Group were "never" concerned about job security following completion of the task. This finding was validated by Study Group members on an interview setting.

Table 6.17

Respondents' Concern Over
Job Security

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were concerned about job security following completion of the task. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1.00 | 3 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

None of the task force members felt that their work in the task force had any significant impact on their subsequent career patterns.

Members of the Study Group were asked, what if any, professional growth occurred as a result of participation in the Study Group. All members felt the experience had been developmental for them personally. The following quotes illustrate the nature of comments regarding the Study Group:

...one of the best years of my working career.

I found it to be very interesting and exciting operation. It brought me in contact with many kinds of people I'd not had much contact with before. It also brought me into contact with a physical and environmental climate that I'd had little contact with before and I found it most interesting.

SUMMARY

A brief background to the Northland Study Group was presented in the chapter. The major objective of the Study Group according to Swift et al. (1975:153) was: "...to study

and conduct an overall review and appraisal of the functions, administration, operation, and services of the Northland School Division No. 61." The specific objectives for the task force were also stated.

The following TASK DEMANDS which were placed on the Study Group were examined.

Purposes

One general purpose was found to be "extremely" important to the Study Group membership. This was to provide direction for a larger organization. Three other purposes were found to be "quite" important. These were: to accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time; to make plans to provide persons outside the task force with new skills; and to provide services to help a larger organization. Members did not perceive that there were any informal or hidden purposes for the task force.

Goal Acceptance

The formal goals of the Study Group were "always" implicitly accepted and "often" explicitly accepted by the membership.

Clarity of Guidelines

The guidelines were "always" clear to Study Group members. "Seldom" were these guidelines complex.

Nature of the Task

Members of the Study Group "seldom" had to deal with routine tasks or problems but "often" had to deal with complex tasks or problems.

Time Limits

Members of the Study Group were "always" aware of the time limits placed on the project. All members felt the time available was reasonable in light of the task to be accomplished.

Following this examination of task demands the chapter contains an investigation of the RESOURCES available to the Study Group. These resources included membership characteristics, information access, and funding.

The Membership

The Study Group membership was a highly educated group with considerable experience in the field of education. The size of the task force and mix of persons were deemed appropriate for the task. The Study Group members were "always" concerned about task accomplishment and considered themselves "often" to be adaptable and flexible. Formal leadership was "always" available to the Study Group.

Information Access

At a decision point accurate and adequate information was "often" provided for members of the Study Group. The source of information was "often" the parent organization, i.e., Department of Education, "often" groups and individuals outside the parent organization, and "often" the expertise of the Study Group membership.

Information overload did not occur in the Northland Study Group and "occasionally" too little information was provided for members.

Funding

Sufficient funds were provided for the operation of the Study Group.

PROCESS variables were examined in the context of the Northland Study Group. These included decision making procedures, status relationships, energy expenditure, dysfunctional process, and group atmosphere.

Decision Making

Members of the Study Group "always" participated in decision making and the decision making process "always" encouraged teamwork. "Seldom" were decisions made for the Study Group by someone outside and "seldom" were decisions checked with anyone outside the Study Group before action was taken.

Status Relationships

Members perceived that they "often" had equal status in the Study Group. Leadership was stable and "seldom" did different leaders emerge. A noticeable hierarchy "often" existed within the task force.

Communication

Communication among task force members was good or excellent. Communication was also good with the parent organization at all levels and no linkage failure appeared to exist. Some communication problems did appear to exist when the Study Group dealt with native people in Northland School Division.

Energy Expenditure

"Occasionally" more energy was expended as a member of the Study Group than in a regular work setting.

Dysfunctional Process

Members of the Study Group felt that they "occasionally" set unrealistic goals. Symptoms of groupthink were not present in the Study Group.

Group Atmosphere

The score on this scale indicated that the group atmosphere of the Study Group was less than good. This appeared to result from a concern over the way the recommendations of the Study Group were dealt with since its completion and not from problems of interaction among Study Group members.

PRODUCTIVITY was examined in a latter section of the chapter. Investigated were the achievement of purposes, member satisfaction, and additional personal outcomes for the membership.

Achievement of Purposes

The purpose "to provide direction for a larger organization" was partially achieved. Two other purposes were partially achieved as well. These were: to make plans to reeducate or retrain an individual or group outside the task force; and, to provide services to help a larger organization.

In terms of accomplishing a task in a prespecified amount of time, i.e., producing a report, the members felt

this was fully achieved. They also felt that the task was better accomplished than it could have been had it been attempted by a regular hierarchical organization, i.e., the Department of Education.

All members were concerned with the lack of implementation of recommendations made to the Department of Education.

Satisfaction

In terms of general satisfaction respondents were "satisfied" in both the regular work and task force settings. On one subscale dealing with the way colleagues got along with each other there was a noticeable difference. Members were very satisfied in the Study Group setting and only satisfied in the regular work setting.

Personal Outcomes

All members felt that they developed personally as a result of participation in the Study Group. The Study Group did not appear to have any impact on future careers of the members. No job insecurity resulted from members' participation in the Study Group.

Chapter 7

ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

TASK FORCE ON ACCREDITATION

This chapter contains a descriptive analysis of the Alberta Teachers' Association Task Force on Accreditation. In this chapter, the presentation of background information on the task force is followed by four major sections, namely, task demands, resources, process, and productivity. This conceptualization was developed by Steiner (1972) who claims that productivity depends upon the other three variables. A summary of findings forms the conclusion for the chapter.

BACKGROUND

The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) Task Force on Accreditation was set up in the fall of 1973 for the purpose of studying various facets of accreditation as it existed in Alberta and recommending policy and executive action relating to accreditation. According to an ATA memo the task force originated as follows:

Following the Department of Education announcement of accreditation procedures in February 1973 and the subsequent accreditation of all schools by September of the same year, a number of teachers expressed concern over Department of Education actions, school and system reactions, and the changed nature of teacher responsibilities. In response to these expressions of concern, the Provincial Executive Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association set up a task force consisting largely of teachers to advise Council and propose appropriate action.

This task force was an impure or collateral temporary system consisting of eight persons. The chairman and recording secretary were Alberta Teachers' Association staff officers. The remainder of task force members were not employed by the Alberta Teachers' Association and represented various levels in the teaching ranks, as well as superintendents and consultants. A ninth member joined the task force for the final four months of the operation. Because of his short tenure the latter individual was not included in the study population.

Accreditation can take on many meanings. The definition developed by the task force relates to the Alberta setting.

Accreditation in Alberta is Department of Education delegation of its role in student evaluation to school boards operating schools which employ certified teachers, instruct for the minimum required time in a subject, adhere to the Program of Studies unless released by the Minister, endorse and submit school marks for recording and approval by the Department of Education, announce and provide appeal procedures involving a Departmental Examination, evaluate students by fair and just means, and operate the school according to the Junior-Senior High School Handbook. (Alberta Teachers' Association 1975:5)

The task force officially concluded its work with the presentation of a report to the Provincial Executive Council in the spring of 1975.

Data utilized in this chapter were collected from the eight members of the task force by means of questionnaires and personal interviews.

TASK DEMANDS

Steiner (1972:7) claims that task demands include the requirements imposed on the group by the task itself or by the rules under which the task must be performed. In the following analyses, information is presented which relates to various task demands placed upon members of the Alberta Teachers' Association Task Force on Accreditation. These task demands resulted from the purposes the members perceived they had to achieve, the types of problems they had to solve, the clarity of the guidelines set for the task force, and the time limits under which the task force operated.

Purposes

Task demands in any group setting are, in part, generated by formally stated purposes but also arise from other purposes perceived to be important by the group members.

Table 7.1 illustrates the importance of various purposes as perceived by members of the ATA Task Force. Mean scores were computed using the following scale: 5=extremely important purpose of the task force; 4=quite important purpose of the task force; 3=somewhat important purpose of the task force; 2=slightly important purpose of the task force; 1=a purpose not important to the task force.

Purpose 1: to accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time. Table 7.1 reveals that this purpose was considered "quite" important by the ATA Task Force.

Table 7.1

Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Importance of
Accreditation Task Force Purposes

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. To accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time. | 2 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4.00 | 8 |
| 2. To bring about a change in individual behavior. | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 2.25 | 8 |
| 3. To reeducate or retrain the members of the task force. | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2.38 | 8 |
| 4. To make plans to reeducate or retrain an individual or group outside the task force. | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4.13 | 8 |
| 5. To provide members of the task force with new skills. | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 1.88 | 8 |
| 6. To make plans to provide persons outside the task force with new skills. | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 3.00 | 8 |
| 7. To provide treatment for an individual or group. | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2.75 | 8 |
| 8. To provide help to a larger organization. | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4.38 | 8 |

*5=extremely important; 4=quite important; 3=somewhat important; 2=slightly important; 1=not important.

Table 7.1 continued

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 9. To provide an opportunity for social interaction among the task force members. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 1.75 | 8 |
| 10. To provide direction for a larger organization. | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.00 | 8 |

*5=extremely important; 4=quite important; 3=somewhat important; 2=slightly important; 1=not important.

Purpose_2: to bring about a change in individual behavior. The data in Table 7.1 illustrate that this purpose was considered "slightly" important by members of the ATA Task Force.

Purpose_3: to reeducate or retrain the members of the task force. The data in Table 7.1 show that this purpose was considered "slightly" important to members of the ATA Task Force.

Purpose_4: to make plans to reeducate or retrain an individual or group outside the task force. The data on Table 7.1 show that this purpose was considered "quite" important to members of the ATA Task Force.

Purpose_5: to provide members of the task force with new skills. The data in Table 7.1 reveal that this purpose was considered "slightly" important by members of the ATA Task Force.

Purpose_6: to make plans to provide persons outside the task force with new skills. The data contained in Table 7.1 suggest that this purpose was considered "somewhat" important by members of the ATA Task Force.

Purpose_7: to provide treatment for an individual or group. The data in Table 7.1 suggest that this was considered "somewhat" important by the ATA Task Force.

Purpose_8: to provide services to help a larger organization. The data contained in Table 7.1 illustrate that this purpose was considered "quite" important by members of the ATA Task Force.

Purpose_9: to provide an opportunity for social interaction among the task force members. The data in Table 7.1 show that this purpose was rated "slightly" important by members of the ATA Task Force.

Purpose_10: to provide direction for a larger organization. The data in Table 7.1 reveal that this purpose was perceived to be "extremely" important by the members of the ATA Task Force.

Several of the preceding purposes, which were extracted from the literature pertaining to temporary systems, were of considerable importance to the ATA Task Force. Specifically, Purpose 10 was considered "extremely" important and Purposes 1, 4, and 8 were considered "quite" important. The task force, therefore, had purposes consistent with those most commonly attributed to temporary systems in the literature.

In addition to the preceding purposes, several members

of the ATA Task Force expressed less formal purposes during unstructured portions of interviews. Four members mentioned that the work of the task force went beyond accreditation and studied the whole area relating to evaluation. Speaking of work in the task force, one member stated that it was:

...an educative process because, as the committee gathered experience, we became much more knowledgeable about types of things that go on in evaluation. We later became ATA's experts on evaluation.

Another member stated there was:

...a lot of genuine interest, collectively, in evaluation - what it is, what it represents, and changes that had to take place in business and the private sector. How were we responsible? We were strong on the idea that administrators and teachers had to stop trying to predict success....Evaluation is important. We spend a lot of time on it.

Another informal purpose of the task force related to the political nature of the accreditation issue at the time. Three members specifically mentioned "political activity" as a purpose of the task force. Illustrative is the following quotation. The respondent was asked if the task force were used by the ATA as a means of gaining influence. The response:

Without doubt. There are three powerful bodies in the province with their own aims and objectives; the Trustees, the Department of Education, and the ATA. ATA would like accreditation to go along lines that would be of most benefit to teachers. A natural thing.

Goal Acceptance

Table 7.2 contains a measure of the degree to which ATA Task Force members accepted the formal goals of the task force. Mean scores were computed using the following scale: 5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. The data in Table 7.2 illustrate that the formal goals of the task force were "always" explicitly accepted and "often" implicitly accepted by the task force membership.

Table 7.2

Respondents' Perceptions of Goal Acceptance by Accreditation Task Force Members

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. The formal goals of the task force were explicitly accepted. | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.50 | 8 |
| 2. The formal goals of the task force were implicitly accepted. | 2 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4.13 | 8 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

Clarity of Guidelines

Another task demand relates to the clarity of guidelines established for and by the task members. Table 7.3 contains information relating to this issue. Data in Table 7.3 suggest that the guidelines for the task force were "often" clearly established and that "occasionally"

guidelines were complex and had to be clarified by the membership.

Table 7.3

Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Nature of the Guidelines for the Accreditation Task Force

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. The guidelines were clear to the members from the beginning. | 2 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4.00 | 8 |
| 2. The guidelines for the task force were complex and had to be clarified by the members. | 0 | 1 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 3.13 | 8 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

Nature of the Task

Table 7.4 contains data relating to the nature of the problems and tasks with which members of the ATA Task Force were asked to deal. These data illustrate that task force members were "seldom" asked to deal with routine tasks or problems but were "often" asked to deal with complex tasks or problems. This supports the claim in the literature that temporary systems are often used to deal with complex tasks or nonroutine problems.

Table 7.4

Respondents' Perceptions of the Types of
Tasks or Problems Dealt With
by the Accreditation Task Force

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were asked to deal with routine tasks or problems. | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2.38 | 8 |
| 2. Members of the task force were asked to deal with complex tasks or problems. | 2 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4.13 | 8 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

Time Limits

A final task demand relates to the time limits placed on the task or project. Data in Table 7.5 illustrate that members of the task force were "often" aware of the time limits placed on the project. All members responded in a parallel question that they were aware at the outset that the ATA Task Force was of a temporary nature and would complete its work within a definite time span.

In an interview setting five of eight members mentioned that time was sufficient for completion of the task. Two members felt that the task force was highly productive considering the time spent.

Table 7.5

Respondents' Awareness of
Project Time Limits

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were aware of the time limits placed on the project. | 3 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.38 | 8 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

RESOURCES

Steiner (1972:7) claims that resources:

...include all the relevant knowledge, abilities, skills or tools possessed by the individuals who [are] attempting to perform the task...this determinant of productivity also includes the distribution of relevant resources among group members.

This section of the chapter examines the resources possessed by the ATA Task Force on Accreditation. In addition to the task force size, the resources include personal characteristics of task force members, such as experience, formal education, task orientation, and adaptability. Other resources include available leadership, information access, and financial support.

The Membership

The ATA Task Force consisted of eight persons, two of whom were full time employees of the Alberta Teachers' Association. All members were working on the task force in addition to maintaining regular permanent positions. The

group consisted of seven males and one female. One member of the task force had obtained a doctorate and two had received master's degrees or equivalent, and the remaining five members possessed bachelor's degrees.

Three task force members had more than 20 years experience as professional educators, two had between 16 and 20 years, two had between 6 and 10 years, and one person had between 2 and 5 years experience. Three members had worked previously in a task force setting.

During interviews all members were asked to comment on the appropriateness of the task force in terms of size and mix of persons. All members felt the size was appropriate. Most expressed the viewpoint that in a group of this size all members had the opportunity to contribute extensively. All members also felt the mix of persons was appropriate. It was expressed by four persons that the combination of ATA staff with teachers in the field was an effective arrangement. Many organizational levels were represented by the task force membership, i.e., elementary and high school teachers, a counsellor, and a curriculum supervisor.

Task force members' concern for the task, or task orientation, is illustrated by Table 7.6. The data in Table 7.6 show that members of the task force were "always" concerned about task accomplishment.

The degree to which task force members perceive themselves to be adaptable and flexible is a key ingredient in a time bound system. The data in Table 7.7 illustrate

Table 7.6

Respondents' Perceptions of Accreditation Task Force
Members' Task Orientation

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were concerned about task accomplishment. | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.75 | 8 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

Table 7.7

Respondents' Perceptions of Accreditation Task Force
Adaptability and Flexibility

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were adaptable with respect to change. | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4.25 | 8 |
| 2. Members of the task force were flexible and willing to change direction. | 2 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4.00 | 8 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

that members of the task force considered themselves "often"
to be adaptable and flexible with respect to change.

Another resource available to the task force was formal
leadership. Table 7.8 contains data which illustrate the
task force members' awareness of the established leadership.

These data show that members were "always" aware of the leadership that was established when the task force was created.

Table 7.8
Respondents' Perceptions of the
Establishment of Leadership

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Leadership in the task force was established when the task force was created. | 7 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.88 | 3 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

**data was not collected from the director (formal leader)
of the task force.

Information Access

The access to information of various types is a key resource to any task group. Table 7.9 contains data which illustrate that at a decision point accurate and adequate information was "always" provided. The source of this information was "often" the parent organization, i.e., the Alberta Teachers' Association, "often" groups or individuals outside the parent organization, and "often" the expertise of the task force membership. Information overload was not a characteristic common to the ATA Task Force. Table 7.9 shows that "seldom" was too much information provided for the

members of the task force and "occasionally" too little information was provided.

Table 7.9

Respondents' Perceptions of the
Amounts and Sources of Information
Available to the Accreditation Task Force

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Accurate and adequate information was provided for all members of the task force when a decision was to be made. | 5 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.63 | 8 |
| 2. The parent organization provided information for the task force. | 3 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.38 | 8 |
| 3. Groups and individuals outside the parent organization provided information for the task force. | 0 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 3.50 | 8 |
| 4. Information was derived from the expertise of members within the task force. | 0 | 7 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3.88 | 8 |
| 5. Too much information was provided for members of the task force. | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 1.75 | 8 |
| 6. Too little information was provided for members of the task force. | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2.38 | 8 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

Funding

The Accreditation Task Force was provided with ample funding by the parent organization, the Alberta Teachers' Association. No members expressed a concern with respect to finances for the task force.

PROCESS

Steiner (1972:8) claims process consists of the steps taken by a group when confronted by a task:

It includes all those intrapersonal and interpersonal actions by which people transform their resources into a product, and all those nonproductive actions that are prompted by frustration, competing motivations, or inadequate understanding.

The task group processes examined in the following pages include decision making procedures, status relationships, communication patterns, energy expenditure, dysfunctional process, and group atmosphere of the task force.

Decision Making

Table 7.10 contains data which illustrate decision making procedures within the ATA Task Force. The data illustrate that "seldom" were decisions made for the task force by anyone outside the task force. Broad policy decisions were "occasionally" made outside the task force. Decisions made within the task force were "occasionally" checked with someone outside the task force before action was taken.

The data in Table 7.10 also indicate that members

Table 7.10

Respondents' Perceptions of Decision Making
Strategies within the Accreditation Task Force

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Decisions were made for the task force by someone outside the task force. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 1.88 | 8 |
| 2. Broad policy decisions were made outside the task force but more specific decisions were made within the task force. | 1 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 3.13 | 8 |
| 3. Decisions were made within a prescribed framework by the task force but were usually checked with someone outside the task force before action. | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3.25 | 8 |
| 4. All members of the task force participated in decisions. | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.75 | 8 |
| 5. The decision making process in the task force encouraged teamwork. | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.75 | 8 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

"always" participated in decisions and that the decision making process "always" encouraged teamwork.

Status Relationships

Table 7.11 contains data relating to the status relationships among members of the ATA Task Force on Accreditation. These data illustrate that members of the

task force, including leaders, "always" had equal status in the task force. This finding supports the literature which suggests that equal status relationships tend to develop in temporary systems.

Table 7.11

Respondents' Perceptions of Status Relationships,
Emerging Leadership, and Noticeable Hierarchy
within the Accreditation Task Force

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force, including leaders, had equal status in the task force. | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.50 | 8 |
| 2. Different leaders emerged depending upon conditions in the task force. | 0 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 2.75 | 8 |
| 3. There was a noticeable hierarchy within the task force. | 1 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 2.50 | 8 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

"Occasionally" different leaders emerged depending upon conditions in the task force and there was "occasionally" a noticeable hierarchy within the task force.

Communication

In an interview setting all members of the Accreditation Task Force were asked to describe the communication among task force members. They were probed to

discuss the openness and effectiveness of this communication. All members expressed the view that communication was good, very good, or excellent. Within the task force there was little disagreement and everyone had an opportunity to communicate.

Communication between the task force and the Provincial Executive Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association was handled by the task force director. All task force members expressed satisfaction with the way their ideas were put forth to the Provincial Executive Council by the task force leader. Thus, there appeared to be no linkage failure between the task force and the parent organization.

Two members chose to comment that the task force was successful in communicating with teachers when the need arose.

Energy Expenditure

The literature suggests that persons tend to expend more energy as members of a temporary system than in a regular work setting. Table 7.12 suggests that this was "often" the case with members of the ATA Task Force.

Dysfunctional Process

According to the literature (Miles 1964) members of temporary systems tend to engage in unrealistic goal setting. This did not appear to be the case to any great degree in the ATA Task Force. Table 7.13 contains data which show that "occasionally" members tended to set unrealistic goals for the system.

Table 7.12

Respondents' Perceptions of Energy
Expenditure in the Accreditation Task Force

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. More energy was expended as a member of the task force than in most other working conditions. | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3.50 | 8 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

Table 7.13

Respondents' Perceptions of Unrealistic Goal
Setting in the Accreditation Task Force

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force tended to set goals for the system that were unrealistic. | 1 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 2.63 | 8 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

Another dysfunctional process, the groupthink phenomenon (Janis 1972), did not appear to be apparent in the ATA Task Force. No presence of the symptoms of this phenomenon could be detected.

According to the data contained in Table 7.14 the group atmosphere of the ATA Task Force could be considered good.

PRODUCTIVITY

Productivity refers to the actual outcomes which result from task demands, resources, and process. Productivity in the case of the ATA Task Force includes task accomplishment, i.e., the degree to which purposes are achieved, and member satisfaction. Less direct outcomes of a temporary system could include effects on the system members, such as career pattern changes, job security, and professional growth. This section of the chapter examines the productivity of the ATA Task Force.

Achievement of Purposes

The task force achieved its major formal purpose in that it did present a position paper to the Provincial Executive Council and subsequently to the Annual General Meeting which became the basis of Alberta Teachers' Association policy changes with respect to accreditation.

Of more importance to the present study was the degree to which the ATA Task Force achieved purposes which were deemed important by the task force membership. Table 7.15 contains data which illustrate the degree of achievement of the "extremely" important and "quite" important purposes of the Task Force on Accreditation as perceived by the membership. According to the data contained in Table 7.15 two of these purposes were "fully" achieved, namely, to accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time and to

provide services to help a larger organization. Also, Table 7.15 illustrates that two purposes were "partially" achieved, namely, to provide direction for a larger organization and to make plans to reeducate or retrain an individual or group outside the task force.

Table 7.15

Respondents' Perceptions of the Degree of Achievement of Important Purposes of the Accreditation Task Force

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. To provide direction for a larger organization. | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2.38 | 8 |
| 2. To provide services to help a larger organization. | 4 | 3 | 0 | 2.57 | 7 |
| 3. To make plans to reeducate or retrain an individual or group outside the task force. | 0 | 7 | 0 | 2.00 | 7 |
| 4. To accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time. | 5 | 3 | 0 | 2.63 | 8 |

*3=fully achieved; 2=partially achieved; 1=not achieved.

These findings are interpreted as showing that task force members felt their purposes were, for the most part, achieved, and that they perceived the task force to be quite successful in its efforts.

Members were asked if they felt the task force was more

effective in achieving its purposes than a regular hierarchical organization, might have been. All members felt that ATA staff or another agency could not have done the job as well. Six members felt the involvement of classroom teachers was important and brought an essential perspective to the task force, i.e.,

...getting the kind of input we got from the people who were in the classroom day after day, and who also had knowledge of the Association [ATA], that mix did a job that would be hard to duplicate by staff.

One member suggested that the outcome may not have differed if the task were completed by ATA staff but it would have less credibility.

Satisfaction

Many theorists suggest that members' satisfaction can be considered a product or outcome of an organization. Satisfaction is claimed by Bennis (1966) to be an outcome of most temporary systems. Table 7.16 contains data which illustrate the degree of satisfaction that existed for members of the ATA Task Force. A revised version of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss et al.) was utilized to obtain this data. Due to the small n these data cannot be statistically analysed for significant differences, however, because all members of the task force were surveyed, some trends are worthy of note. The data in Table 7.16 illustrate that differences may exist on several variables between members' regular work and their work on

the ATA Task Force. On these subscales, namely, cooperation from co-workers, and supervision, (both human relations and technical), members had higher satisfaction levels in the task force setting than in their regular work. On two other subscales, namely, advancement opportunities and security, members had higher satisfaction levels in their regular work setting than in the task force setting. These trends may be worthy of further investigation.

In terms of general satisfaction, as illustrated in Table 7.16, members appeared to be "satisfied" in both the regular work and task force settings.

Personal Outcomes

As was noted in the previous section members of the task force may have had some concern about job security on the task force setting. This is not supported by the data in Table 7.17. These data show that members of the ATA Task Force were "never" concerned about job security following completion of the task.

Another personal outcome of the task force relates to the impact of the experience on individual career patterns. Members of the task force were asked if their membership in the task force had any impact on their subsequent career pattern. Five task force members did not feel that their career pattern had changed as a result of work on the task force. The other three felt that it did or could affect their career. Because of the visibility two members were given the opportunity to seek positions which might not have

Table 7.16

Respondents' Satisfaction within Accreditation Task Force
and in Regular Work Situation

| SCALE | REGULAR WORK | | TASK FORCE | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|------|------------|--------|
| | sum | mean | sum | mean |
| 1. Ability utilization | 34 | 4.25 | 34 | 4.25 |
| 2. Achievement | 35 | 4.38 | 32 | 4.00 |
| 3. Activity | 31 | 3.88 | 29 | 3.63 |
| 4. Advancement | 31 | 3.88 | 26 | 3.25 * |
| 5. Authority | 33 | 4.13 | 30 | 3.75 |
| 6. Policies and practices | 31 | 3.88 | 30 | 3.75 |
| 7. Compensation | 34 | 4.25 | 31 | 3.88 |
| 8. Co-workers | 35 | 4.38 | 39 | 4.88 * |
| 9. Creativity | 32 | 4.00 | 33 | 4.13 |
| 10. Independence | 32 | 4.00 | 28 | 3.50 |
| 11. Moral values | 31 | 3.88 | 37 | 4.63 * |
| 12. Recognition | 32 | 4.00 | 32 | 4.00 |
| 13. Responsibility | 32 | 4.00 | 34 | 4.25 |
| 14. Security | 33 | 4.13 | 26 | 3.25 * |
| 15. Social service | 35 | 4.38 | 36 | 4.50 |
| 16. Social status | 33 | 4.13 | 34 | 4.25 |
| 17. Supervision- human relations | 28 | 3.50 | 39 | 4.88 * |
| 18. Supervision- technical | 31 | 3.88 | 37 | 4.63 * |
| 19. Variety | 35 | 4.38 | 35 | 4.38 |
| 20. Working conditions | 33 | 4.13 | 36 | 4.50 |
| 21. General satisfaction | 651 | 4.07 | 658 | 4.11 |

5=very satisfied; 4=satisfied; 3=neutral; 2=dissatisfied;
1=very dissatisfied:

*=trend

otherwise been available to them. One person received an appointment to a high level committee as a result of work on the task force.

Members of the task force were also asked how the task force affected them in terms of professional growth. Seven of eight members felt they had developed professionally as a result of the experience. Growth occurred both in terms of

Table 7.17

Respondents Concern Over
Job Security

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were concerned about job security following completion of the task. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 7 | 1.13 | 8 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

process skills and knowledge of particular content.

SUMMARY

A brief background to the Alberta Teachers' Association Task Force on Accreditation was presented in the chapter. The task force was set up by the Provincial Executive Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association to advise the Council and propose appropriate action with respect to accreditation. A definition of accreditation was provided in the initial section of the chapter.

A number of TASK DEMANDS which were placed on the task force membership were examined. Findings are summarized below.

Purposes

One purpose of the task force was considered "extremely" important, i.e., to provide direction for a larger organization. Three other purposes were considered "quite" important. The task force had purposes consistent

with those most commonly attributed in the literature to temporary systems.

Goal Acceptance

The formal goals of the task force were "always" explicitly accepted and "often" implicitly accepted by the task force membership.

Clarity of Guidelines

Guidelines for the task force were "often" clearly established but were "occasionally" complex and in need of clarification by the membership.

Nature of the Task

Task force members were "seldom" asked to deal with routine tasks or problems but were "often" asked to deal with complex tasks or problems.

Time Limits

All members were aware that the ATA Task Force was of a temporary nature and would complete its work within a definite time span. Members were "often" aware of the time limits. The time was considered sufficient for task completion.

The chapter also contains the report of an investigation of RESOURCES available to the task force. These resources included membership characteristics, information access, and funding.

The Membership

The task force membership consisted of eight well educated, highly experienced individuals. The size and mix of people were deemed appropriate for the task. Members were "always" concerned about task accomplishment and "often" adaptable and flexible with respect to change. Members were "always" aware of the leadership that was established when the task force was created.

Information Access

Accurate and adequate information was "always" provided for task force members at a decision point. The source of this information varied.

Funding

Ample funding for the task force was provided by the parent organization, i.e., the Alberta Teachers' Association.

PROCESS variables were examined in the context of the ATA Task Force. These included decision making procedures, status relationships, energy expenditure, and group atmosphere.

Decision Making

The task force was relatively independent with respect to decisions. Members "always" participated in decisions and the decision making processs "always" encouraged teamwork.

Status Relationships

Equal status relationships "always" existed in the task force and "occasionally" different leaders emerged depending upon conditions in the task force. There was "occasionally" a noticeable hierarchy within the task force.

Communication

Communication within the task force and between the task force and the parent organization was very good. No linkage failure appeared to exist.

Energy expenditure

Members of the task force "often" expended more energy in the task force setting than in their regular work setting.

Dysfunctional Process

"Occasionally" the task force members set unrealistic goals for themselves. The groupthink phenomenon was not present in the task force.

Group Atmosphere

The group atmosphere was considered good by members of the task force.

The PRODUCTIVITY of the task force was examined in the last major section of the chapter.

Achievement of Purposes

Two important purposes were "fully" achieved, namely, to accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time and to provide services to help a larger organization. Two other important purposes were "partially" achieved.

Satisfaction

Task force members were satisfied in both the regular work and task force settings. This was the case for the measure of general satisfaction. Several trends were noted on specific subscales.

Personal Outcomes

The effects of participation in the task force on the career patterns of some members were noted. Seven of eight members felt they developed professionally as a result of their experience on the ATA Task Force.

Chapter 8

COUNTY OF STRATHCONA FRENCH PROJECT

This chapter contains a descriptive analysis of the County of Strathcona Number 20 French Project. The population for this analysis was the four members of the Steering Committee which researched and developed a curriculum plan for the junior high French program. The Steering Committee was an impure or collateral temporary system.

Following background information on the task force (Steering Committee) the chapter is divided into the four major sections of task demands, resources, process, and productivity. A summary of findings forms the conclusion for the chapter.

BACKGROUND

In April 1976 the Edmonton Regional Office of Education completed an evaluation report on the French program in the County of Strathcona Number 20. As a result of this report a number of steps were taken to implement its recommendations. A key recommendation of the report (Lazaruk and Oldenof 1976:17) was that:

A realistic curriculum plan be developed by the teachers of French which would include a rationale, goals, specific objectives, teaching strategies, and evaluation procedures for each French course offered.

To achieve this, a Steering Committee consisting of four teachers was established. This Steering Committee (task force) operated for a fixed time period from early September

to December 1976 in an effort to meet certain objectives. A proposal was submitted to the Federal Provincial Bilingual Education Program for assistance. According to this proposal the formal purposes of the Steering Committee were:

1. To prepare a curriculum plan for French consisting of:
 - i) Rationale, goals, specific objectives
 - ii) Linguistic and cultural content.
 - iii) Strategies related to listening, speaking reading, grammar, culture, etc.
 - iv) Evaluation procedures related to the above.
2. To implement a curriculum plan.
3. To prepare appropriate achievement placement tests.
4. To identify and select appropriate print and nonprint materials for schools and for Media Research Center.
5. To examine, select and implement core instructional materials on the basis of the curriculum plan developed.
6. To conduct appropriate inservice activities to assist in the implementation of the new program.
(County of Strathcona 1976:4)

The present chapter contains information concerning the Steering Committee, a collateral temporary system, from the time of its formation until its report was presented. Data were collected from all four members of the Steering Committee utilizing questionnaire and interview techniques.

TASK DEMANDS

Steiner (1972:7) claims that task demands include the requirements imposed on the group by the task itself or by the rules under which the task must be performed.

In the following analyses, information which relates to various task demands placed upon members of the Steering Committee is presented. These task demands resulted from the purposes the members perceived they had to achieve, the types of problems they had to solve, the clarity of the guidelines set for the task force, and the time limits under which the task force operated.

Purposes

Table 8.1 illustrates the importance of various purposes as perceived by members of the Steering Committee. Mean scores were computed using the following scale: 5=extremely important purpose of the task force; 4= quite important purpose of the task force; 3=somewhat important purpose of the task force; 2=slightly important purpose of the task force; 1=a purpose not important to the task force.

Purpose_1: to accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time. The data in Table 8.1 reveal that this purpose was considered "quite" important by the Steering Committee.

Purpose_2: to bring about a change in individual behavior. The data in Table 8.1 illustrate that this purpose was considered "quite" important by members of the Steering Committee.

Purpose_3: to reeducate or retrain the members of the task force. The data in Table 8.1 show that this purpose was not considered important by members of the Steering Committee.

Table 8.1

Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Importance of Steering Committee Purposes

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. To accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time. | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4.25 | 4 |
| 2. To bring about a change in individual behavior. | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4.00 | 4 |
| 3. To reeducate or retrain the members of the task force. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1.00 | 4 |
| 4. To make plans to reeducate or retrain an individual or group outside the task force. | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4.25 | 4 |
| 5. To provide members of the task force with new skills. | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2.75 | 4 |
| 6. To make plans to provide persons outside the task force with new skills. | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4.00 | 4 |
| 7. To provide treatment for an individual or group. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1.00 | 2 |
| 8. To provide help to a larger organization. | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3.50 | 4 |

*5=extremely important; 4=quite important; 3=somewhat important; 2=slightly important; 1=not important.

Table 8.1 continued

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 9. To provide an opportunity for social interaction among the task force members. | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 2.25 | 4 |
| 10. To provide direction for a larger organization. | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.00 | 4 |
| *5=extremely important; 4=quite important; 3=somewhat important; 2=slightly important; 1=not important. | | | | | | | |

Purpose_4: to make plans to reeducate or retrain an individual or group outside the task force. The data in Table 8.1 reveal that this purpose was considered "quite" important to members of the Steering Committee.

Purpose_5: to provide members of the task force with new skills. The data in Table 8.1 reveal that this purpose was considered only "somewhat" important by members of the Steering Ccmmittee.

Purpose_6: to make plans to provide persons outside the task force with new skills. The data contained in Table 8.1 suggest that this purpose was considered "quite" important by members of the Steering Ccmmittee.

Purpose_7: to provide treatment for an individual or group. The data in Table 8.1 suggest that this was not an important purpose for the Steering Ccmmittee. Two-thirds of the members indicated that it was either not applicable or

not appropriate.

Purpose_8: to provide services to help a larger organization. The data contained in Table 8.1 illustrate that this purpose was considered "quite" important by members of the Steering Committee.

Purpose_9: to provide an opportunity for social interaction among the task force members. The data in Table 8.1 show that this purpose was rated "slightly" important by members of the Steering Committee.

Purpose_10: to provide direction for a larger organization. The data in Table 8.1 reveal that this purpose was perceived to be "extremely" important by members of the Steering Committee.

Several of the preceding purposes, which were extracted from the literature pertaining to temporary systems, were of considerable importance to the Steering Committee. Specifically, Purpose 10 was considered "extremely" important and Purposes 1, 2, 4, 6, and 8 were considered "quite" important. This task force, therefore, has purposes that are consistent with those most commonly found in temporary systems.

In addition to the preceding purposes, a number of less formal purposes were articulated by task force members in an interview setting. Two members saw the task force as a means of improving communication between junior and senior high school teachers. One member saw the task force as designed to bring about change and one member saw it as an attempt to

remedy a French drop-out problem at the high school level.

Goal Acceptance

Table 8.2 contains a measure of the degree to which French project task members accepted the formal goals of the task force. Mean scores were computed using the following scale: 5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. The data in Table 8.2 illustrate that the formal goals of the task force were "always" explicitly accepted and "often" implicitly accepted by the task force membership.

Table 8.2
Respondents' Perceptions of Goal Acceptance
by Steering Committee Members

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. The formal goals of the task force were explicitly accepted. | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.75 | 4 |
| 2. The formal goals of the task force were implicitly accepted. | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3.75 | 4 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

Clarity of Guidelines

Another task demand relates to the clarity of guidelines established for and by the task force members. Table 8.3 contains data which relate to this issue. These data suggest that the guidelines established for the task

force in the beginning were "always" clear. "Seldom" were the guidelines perceived by the membership to be complex.

Table 8.3

Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Nature of the Guidelines for the Steering Committee

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. The guidelines were clear to the members from the beginning. | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.00 | 4 |
| 2. The guidelines for the task force were complex and had to be clarified by the members. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 1.75 | 4 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

Nature of the Task

Table 8.4 contains information pertinent to the nature of the problems and tasks with which members of the French Project Task Force were asked to deal. According to the data contained in Table 8.4 members of the task force were "occasionally" asked to deal with complex tasks or problems. This supports the claim made in the literature that temporary systems are often used to deal with complex and nonroutine problems.

Table 8.4

Respondents' Perceptions of the Types of
Tasks or Problems Dealt With
by the Steering Committee

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were asked to deal with routine tasks or problems. | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3.25 | 4 |
| 2. Members of the task force were asked to deal with complex tasks or problems. | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3.75 | 4 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

Time Limits

Time limits represent a key task demand for a temporary system. All task force members were aware that the Steering Committee was of a temporary nature and would complete its work within a definite time span. Table 8.5 illustrates that members of the task force were almost "always" aware of the time limits placed on the project.

In an interview setting all members of the task force felt that the time allotted for the project was sufficient. Three out of four members expressed the view that the pressure of formal time limits added to the productivity of the task force.

Table 8.5

Respondents' Awareness of
Project Time Limits

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were aware of the time limits placed on the project. | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.50 | 4 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

RESOURCES

Steiner (1972:7) claims that resources:

...include all the relevant knowledge, abilities, skills or tools possessed by the individuals who [are] attempting to perform the task...this determinant of productivity also includes the distribution of relevant resources among group members.

This section of the chapter examines the resources possessed by the Steering Committee. In addition to task force size, the resources include personal characteristics of task force members, such as experience, formal education, task orientation, and adaptability. Other resources include available leadership, information access, and financial support.

The Membership

The County of Strathcona French Project Steering Committee was a task force consisting of four female teachers working on a part time basis to meet the objectives previously stated. The Steering Committee was assisted by a

Department of Education Curriculum Consultant who provided some leadership for the task force.

One member of the Steering Committee had received a master's degree, while the other three held bachelor's degrees. One member had over 20 years experience as a professional educator, while the other three had between 16 and 20 years experience. Three members of the Steering Committee had previous experience on a task force of some type.

During interview sessions members were asked to comment on the appropriateness of the task force in terms of size and mix of persons. All members felt the size of the Steering Committee was appropriate. Every member also mentioned advantages relating to the mix of people. Because both junior and senior high teachers were represented on the Steering Committee their viewpoints had to be considered which resulted in a product with considerably more continuity than would have otherwise been the case.

Task orientation of the membership is an important resource to a temporary system. Data in Table 8.6 reveal that the Steering Committee members perceived that they were "always" concerned about task accomplishment.

Another resource, the adaptability and flexibility of the membership, is assessed in Table 8.7. The data contained in Table 8.7 illustrate that members of the task force considered themselves "always" to be adaptable and flexible with respect to change.

Table 8.6

Respondents' Perceptions of Steering Committee
Members' Task Orientation

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were concerned about task accomplishment. | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.75 | 4 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

Table 8.7

Respondents' Perceptions of Steering Committee
Adaptability and Flexibility

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were adaptable with respect to change. | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.75 | 4 |
| 2. Members of the task force were flexible and willing to change direction. | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.75 | 4 |
| *5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never. | | | | | | | |

Formal leadership can be a resource to a temporary system. Data in Table 8.8 illustrate that formal leadership was "often" established within the Steering Committee.

Table 8.8

Respondents' Perceptions of the
Establishment of Leadership

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Leadership in the task force was established when the task force was created. | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3.75 | 4 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

Information Access

The access to information of various types is an important resource to any task group. Table 8.9 contains data which illustrate the Steering Committee members' perceptions with respect to information resources available to the task force. These data illustrate that accurate and adequate information was "always" provided for members of the Steering Committee when a decision was to be made. Sources for this information were almost "always" the parent organization and "occasionally" groups and individuals outside the parent organization. In addition, information was "often" derived from the expertise of members within the task force.

Data in Table 8.9 also illustrate that "seldom" was too little or too much information provided for task force members. Information overload did not appear to exist for the members of the Steering Committee.

Table 8.9

Respondents' Perceptions of the
Amounts and Sources of Information
Available to the Steering Committee

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Accurate and adequate information was provided for all members of the task force when a decision was to be made. | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.00 | 4 |
| 2. The parent organization provided information for the task force. | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.50 | 4 |
| 3. Groups and individuals outside the parent organization provided information for the task force. | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3.25 | 4 |
| 4. Information was derived from the expertise of members within the task force. | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.25 | 4 |
| 5. Too much information was provided for members of the task force. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 1.75 | 4 |
| 6. Too little information was provided for members of the task force. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1.50 | 4 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

Funding

The Steering Committee was provided with ample funding for the project. The four members were provided with release time from teaching for those times during which they were working on the project.

PROCESS

Steiner (1972:8) claims process consists of the steps taken by a group when confronted by a task:

It includes all those intrapersonal and interpersonal actions by which people transform their resources into a product, and all those nonproductive actions that are prompted by frustration, competing motivations, or inadequate understanding.

The task group actions or processes to be examined in the following pages include decision making procedures, status relationships, communication patterns, energy expenditure, dysfunctional process, and group atmosphere of the Steering Committee.

Decision Making

Decision making is a key function in any organization. Table 8.10 contains data which illustrate decision making patterns with the Steering Committee. These data show that decisions were "never" made for the Steering Committee by someone outside that committee, however, broad policy decisions were "often" made outside the task force. "Often" decisions were checked with someone outside the task force before action was taken.

The decision making style was highly participative in

Table 8.10

Respondents' Perceptions of Decision Making Strategies within the Steering Committee

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Decisions were made for the task force by someone outside the task force. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 1.25 | 4 |
| 2. Broad policy decisions were made outside the task force but more specific decisions were made within the task force. | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3.75 | 4 |
| 3. Decisions were made within a prescribed framework by the task force but were usually checked with someone outside the task force before action. | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4.00 | 4 |
| 4. All members of the task force participated in decisions. | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.00 | 4 |
| 5. The decision making process in the task force encouraged teamwork. | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.00 | 4 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

nature. Data in Table 8.10 show that members of the Steering Committee "always" participated in decisions and that the decision making process "always" encouraged teamwork.

Status Relationships

Table 8.11 contains data pertaining to the status relationships among members of the Steering Committee. These

data show that members "always" had equal status in the task force. Also, different leaders "often" emerged depending upon conditions in the task force. The data also show that "seldom" was there a noticeable hierarchy in the Steering Committee.

Table 8.11

Respondents' Perceptions of Status Relationships,
Emerging Leadership, and Noticeable Hierarchy
within the Steering Committee

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force, including leaders, had equal status in the task force. | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.00 | 4 |
| 2. Different leaders emerged depending upon conditions in the task force. | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3.50 | 4 |
| 3. There was a noticeable hierarchy within the task force. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1.75 | 4 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

Communication

In an interview setting all members of the Steering Committee were asked to describe the communication among task force members. They were probed to discuss the openness and effectiveness of this communication.

All members remarked that communication among task

force members was very good or excellent. A typical quotation illustrates:

I thought the communication was excellent. I didn't feel one or another member was trying to dominate. We worked as a cooperative group. Each had their own values to bring to the task force, but I didn't feel any one person was trying to dominate....

Members of the Steering Committee were also questioned with respect to communication between the task force and outside groups or agencies. Members expressed the view that communication with the central office and Department of Education was good. One member stated:

Everyone seemed to cooperate to see that this job was done. The Department[of Education] and County [of Strathcona] felt it was necessary to do the work and develop a well articulated program and we knew where we were going.

Communication between the Steering Committee and the French teachers of the school system could best be described as lively. Steering Committee members felt these discussions were frank and open. The following quotations illustrate the point:

Most teachers were already thinking hard about this when we had a general meeting. If they felt strongly, they spoke forcefully. They were, for the most part, willing to accept what the majority felt. They were more than willing to stand up and say what they thought - rationalize their view.

Yes, in certain instances there was a lot of discussion, a lot of in-fighting. Finally, after discussion, the majority arrived at a conclusion that they accepted.

They [teachers] felt they weren't given enough time to look at these things. They also felt there had not been enough communication between the Steering Committee and themselves. They made that

criticism.

We had meetings...with all teachers in the County. That was beautiful. There was free discussion. They didn't agree with everything we did. There was mutual discussion and we saw that in some things we were carrying it too far. We saw they had a point....

Linkage failure was apparent between the Steering Committee and the teachers of the school system, however, the extensive meetings and openness of the task force members appeared to keep it from becoming dysfunctional.

Energy Expenditure

The literature suggests that persons tend to expend more energy as members of a temporary system than in a regular work setting. Table 8.12 contains data which suggest that this was "often" the case with members of the Steering Committee.

Table 8.12

Respondents' Perceptions of Energy Expenditure in the Steering Committee

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. More energy was expended as a member of the task force than in most other working conditions. | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3.75 | 4 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

Dysfunctional Process

According to the literature (Miles 1964), members of temporary systems tend to engage in unrealistic goal setting. Data in Table 8.13 show that this was "seldom" the case with members of the Steering Committee.

Table 8.13

Respondents' Perceptions of Unrealistic Goal
Setting in the Steering Committee

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force tended to set goals for the system that were unrealistic. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1.75 | 4 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

Another dysfunctionl process suggested in the literature (Janis 1972) for cohesive task groups, like the Steering Committee, is the groupthink phenomenon. The symtcms of groupthink (see Chapter 3) did not appear to be present in the Steering Committee.

Group Atmosphere

The group atmosphere of a temporary system is an outgrowth of the process of the system and has direct impact on the productivity of the system. Group atmosphere in the Steering Committee was measured using Fiedler's (1967) Group Atmosphere Scale (GA). Table 8.14 contains data that provide

a measure of this group atmosphere. Posthuma (1970) reports a median Group Atmosphere score for real-life groups of 65. Garland and O'Rielly (1976:18), in a study of schools, defined a "good group atmosphere school" as one which had a score of 69 or higher on the GA scale, while a "poor group atmosphere" school was defined as a school that had a score of 61 or less.

According to the data contained in Table 8.14 the group atmosphere of the Strathcona County French Project Steering Committee could be considered very good. All members were extremely pleased with the way the group functioned.

Table 8.14

Respondents' Perceptions of the Group Atmosphere
of the Steering Committee

| | | | | | | | | | | mean n | |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|--------|
| Frequency of Item Scores | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Friendly | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Unfriendly | 7.50 4 |
| 2. Accepting | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Rejecting | 7.75 4 |
| 3. Satisfying | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Frustrating | 8.00 4 |
| 4. Enthusiastic | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Unenthusiastic | 7.75 4 |
| 5. Productive | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Nonproductive | 7.75 4 |
| 6. Warm | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Cold | 8.00 4 |
| 7. Cooperative | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Uncooperative | 8.00 4 |
| 8. Supportive | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Hostile | 8.00 4 |
| 9. Interesting | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Boring | 8.00 4 |
| 10. Successful | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Unsuccessful | 7.50 4 |
| TOTAL | | | | | | | | | | 78.25 | |

PRODUCTIVITY

Productivity refers to the actual outcomes which result from task demands, resources, and process. Productivity in the case of temporary systems, in general, and the Steering Committee, in particular, includes task accomplishment, i.e., the degree to which purposes were achieved, and member satisfaction. Less direct outcomes of a temporary system could include effects on the system members such as career pattern changes, job security, and professional growth.

Achievement of Purposes

According to a progress report (County of Strathcona 1976:2-3) of the French project the following results were achieved:

1. Preparation of several components of the junior high school program in French.
 - a. Overall program goals.
 - b. Expected learning outcomes.
 - c. Specification of linguistic and cultural content for French in Grade 7, 8 and 9.
2. Identification of teacher/learner strategies for the French program from Grade 7 through French 31.
3. Selection of appropriate supplementary materials for the County of Strathcona Instructional Materials Center.
4. Selection of suitable core instructional materials for French at the junior high school level.

Of more interest in the present study was the degree to which the Steering Committee achieved purposes which were deemed important by the task force membership. Table 8.15 contains data which illustrate the degree of achievement of

the "extremely" important and "quite" important purposes of the Steering Committee. According to these data all important purposes were at least "partially" achieved. The Steering Committee was quite successful in providing direction for a larger organization and accomplishing a task in a prespecified amount of time.

Table 8.15

Respondents' Perceptions of the Degree of Achievement
of Important Purposes of the Steering Committee

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | mean | n |
|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. To bring about a change in individual behavior. | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1.50 | 4 |
| 2. To make plans to reeducate or retrain an individual or group outside the task force. | 0 | 3 | 1 | 1.75 | 4 |
| 3. To make plans to provide persons outside the task force with new skills. | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1.50 | 4 |
| 4. To accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time. | 1 | 3 | 0 | 2.25 | 4 |
| 5. To provide direction for a larger organization. | 1 | 3 | 0 | 2.25 | 4 |
| *3=fully achieved; 2=partially achieved; 1=not achieved. | | | | | |

Members were asked if they felt the Steering Committee

was more effective in achieving its purposes than a regular hierarchical organization, i.e., central office staff or Department of Education, might have been. All members felt that the task could not have been done as effectively by a regular hierarchical organization. Reasons given for this related to the importance of teacher involvement and knowledge, and credibility. The following quotations provide illustrations of the responses:

No, [the job could not have been done by the Department of Education] because at the Department they didn't know our needs. [Also] in the County we had no one who knew what the program consisted of.

They [Department of Education] are still in an ivory tower. We were people who knew exactly what we suffered from day to day and what we could accomplish from day to day.

Unless you are in the actual living situation you can't conceive of the problems and ways of solving them.

The fact that we were so involved made us happier, more ready to accept [results] than if someone said, "You're going to do this."

Satisfaction

Theorists suggest that members' satisfaction can be considered a product or outcome of an organization. Satisfaction is claimed by Bennis (1966) to be an outcome of most temporary systems. Table 8.16 contains data which illustrate the degree of satisfaction that existed for members of the Steering Committee. A revised version of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss et al. 1967) was utilized to obtain these data. Due to the small n it is not

possible to test for significant differences, however, certain trends are worthy of note. In terms of a general satisfaction level, members were "satisfied" in both their regular work setting and the task force setting. It is also worthy of note that the general satisfaction level was considerably higher in the task force setting than in the regular work setting. This trend may be worthy of further investigation.

In seven individual subscales members were considerably more satisfied in the task force setting than in the regular work setting. These subscales were ability utilization, achievement, opportunity to lead, cooperation of co-workers, social status, supervision (human relations), and working conditions. These trends are also worthy of further investigation.

Personal Outcomes

Concern about job security was not apparent among task force members. Data in Table 8.17 show that Steering Committee members were "never" concerned about job security following completion of the task.

Another outcome of the task force relates to the impact of the experience on individuals' career patterns. Members were asked if their participation in the Steering Committee had, or could have any effect on their career pattern. No member felt their career pattern had changed as a result of their work on the task force, however, they all felt their visibility had increased, as well as their competence in the

Table 8.16

Respondents' Satisfaction within Steering Committee
and in Regular Work Situation

| SCALE | REGUIAR WORK | | TASK FORCE | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|------|------------|--------|
| | sum | mean | sum | mean |
| 1. Ability utilization | 17 | 4.25 | 20 | 5.00 * |
| 2. Achievement | 17 | 4.25 | 20 | 5.00 * |
| 3. Activity | 16 | 4.00 | 17 | 4.25 |
| 4. Advancement | 17 | 4.25 | 16 | 4.00 |
| 5. Authority | 15 | 3.75 | 18 | 4.50 * |
| 6. Policies and practices | 17 | 4.25 | 19 | 4.75 |
| 7. Compensation | 15 | 3.75 | 16 | 4.00 |
| 8. Co-workers | 16 | 4.00 | 20 | 5.00 * |
| 9. Creativity | 18 | 4.50 | 19 | 4.75 |
| 10. Independence | 15 | 3.75 | 13 | 3.25 |
| 11. Moral values | 16 | 4.00 | 16 | 4.00 |
| 12. Recognition | 16 | 4.00 | 17 | 4.25 |
| 13. Responsibility | 17 | 4.25 | 19 | 4.75 |
| 14. Security | 14 | 3.50 | 14 | 3.50 * |
| 15. Social service | 17 | 4.25 | 18 | 4.50 |
| 16. Social status | 17 | 4.25 | 20 | 5.00 * |
| 17. Supervision- human relations | 18 | 4.50 | 20 | 5.00 * |
| 18. Supervision- technical | 18 | 4.50 | 19 | 4.75 |
| 19. Variety | 17 | 4.25 | 19 | 4.75 |
| 20. Working conditions | 14 | 3.50 | 19 | 4.75 * |
| 21. General satisfaction | 327 | 4.09 | 359 | 4.49 |

5=very satisfied; 4=satisfied; 3=neutral; 2=dissatisfied;
1=very dissatisfied:

*=trend

subject area. Both of these could be prerequisites to advancement.

Another outcome of the Steering Committee for the members was professional growth. All members expressed the viewpoint that the experience was beneficial to them personally and professionally. The following quotations illustrate this:

Table 8.17

Respondents' Concern Over
Job Security

| ITEM | Number of Respondents for Each Choice on Scale* | | | | | mean | n |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| 1. Members of the task force were concerned about job security following completion of the task. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1.00 | 4 |

*5=always; 4=often; 3=occasionally; 2=seldom; 1=never.

It's been challenging...that's beneficial in
itself.

Helped me see through articulated program step by
step. Helped me understand more - working together
as a professional group.

I turned out to be a better teacher after it was
over.

SUMMARY

A brief background to the Strathcona County French
Project Steering Committee was presented in this chapter.
The major objective of the Steering Committee was to develop
a realistic curriculum plan which would include a rationale,
goals, specific objectives, teaching strategies, and
evaluation procedures for each French course offered.
Specific objectives for the Steering Committee were also
stated in the chapter.

A number of TASK DEMANDS placed on the task force
membership were examined.

Purposes

An "extremely" important purpose for the Steering Committee was to provide direction for a larger organization. Several other purposes were considered by the membership to be "quite" important.

Goal Acceptance

The goals of the Steering Committee were "always" explicitly accepted and "often" implicitly accepted by the membership.

Clarity of Guidelines

The guidelines established for the Steering Committee were "always" clear. "Seldom" were the guidelines perceived as being complex.

Nature of the Task

Members of the Steering Committee were "occasionally" asked to deal with routine tasks or problems. On the other hand, they were "often" asked to deal with complex tasks or problems.

Time Limits

All members were aware that the Steering Committee was of a temporary nature and would complete its work within a definite time span. Members were almost "always" aware of the time limits placed on the project. Time pressure appeared to increase the productivity of the task force.

RESOURCES available to the Steering Committee were examined in the next section of the chapter.

The Membership

The Steering Committee was a task force consisting of four female teachers working on a part time basis. All had considerable teaching experience and three members had previous experience in a task force setting.

The size of the task force and mix of persons were deemed appropriate for the task. Members were "always" task oriented and "always" adaptable and flexible. Formal leadership was "often" established within the Steering Committee.

Information Access

At a decision point accurate and adequate information was always provided for members of the Steering Committee. Sources for this information varied. Information overload was not apparent in the Steering Committee.

Funding

Funding for the project was found to be adequate.

PROCESS variables were examined in the next section of the chapter.

Decision Making

The Steering Committee had considerable autonomy in decision making. "Often" task force decisions were checked with someone outside the task force before action was taken. The decision making style was "always" participative and "always" encouraged teamwork.

Status Relationships

Members of the Steering Committee "always" had equal status in the task force and "seldom" was there a noticeable hierarchy. Also, different leaders "often" emerged depending upon conditions in the task force.

Communication

Communication within the Steering Committee was excellent. Communication between the Steering Committee and the French teachers in the system was frank and open. This frankness and openness appeared to alleviate the linkage failure that might have otherwise existed between the two groups.

Dysfunctional Process

Unrealistic goal setting was "seldom" the case within the Steering Committee. Also, no evidence of groupthink existed in the task force setting.

Group Atmosphere

The GA score was extremely high and, thus, the group atmosphere of the Steering Committee could be considered very good.

The PRODUCTIVITY of the Steering Committee was examined in the concluding section of the chapter.

Achievement of Purposes

All important purposes were at least "partially" achieved. The Steering Committee was quite successful in providing direction for a larger organization and accomplishing a task in a prespecified amount of time.

Members felt that the Steering Committee was more effective in completing the assigned task than a regular hierarchical organization could have been.

Satisfaction

Respondents were "satisfied" in both their regular work and task force settings. The general satisfaction level was considerably higher for members in the task force setting than in the regular work setting. Trends in various subscales were also noted in this section of the chapter.

Personal Outcomes

Concern about job security was not apparent among task force members. Increased visibility and professional growth were personal outcomes of the Steering Committee.

Chapter 9

GENERALIZING CASE ANALYSIS

This chapter contains three major sections. In the first section of the chapter the five temporary systems presented in the previous five chapters are compared, contrasted, and interpreted in light of the characteristics of temporary systems found in the literature. This was done for the purpose of completing study task 4 as stated in Chapter 1. This task can be restated as follows: to determine the perceived impact of the characteristics attributed to temporary systems in the literature on the effectiveness of the particular task force and on task forces, in general.

In this regard Lipset et al. (1979:169) differentiate between two general types of empirical analysis of a single case:

(a) Description and explanation of the single case, to provide information concerning its present state, and the dynamics through which it continues as it does. This may be called a particularizing analysis.

(b) The development of empirical generalizations or theory through the analysis of the single case, using it not to discover anything about it as a system but as an empirical basis either for generalization or theory construction. This may be called a generalizing analysis.

In the first section of this chapter the latter type, i.e., the generalizing analysis, receives the major emphasis when the five cases are compared, contrasted, and interpreted.

The second major section of the chapter focuses on

ideal task forces. Emphasized in this section are respondents' perceptions of the nature of an ideal task force and the potential uses for temporary systems of various types within educational settings. In this section respondents are treated as a panel of experts, i.e., all had experience in a temporary system in an educational setting. Their responses are analysed and presented as a possible future direction with respect to practical utilization of temporary systems in education. The data for this analysis were collected using questionnaire responses, i.e., Section F of the questionnaire concerning ideal task forces (see Appendix A), and also using responses to open ended questions during the interview setting.

The concluding section of the chapter contains a prescriptive statement illustrating the characteristics of an effective task force.

GENERALIZING ANALYSIS

As has been done in previous chapters, Steiner's (1972) conceptual framework was utilized to organize and present the data.

Task Demands

Steiner (1972:7) claims that task demands include the requirements imposed on the group by the task itself or by the rules under which the task must be performed.

A number of task demands were examined in each of the temporary systems studied. A key demand relates to the purposes for which the temporary system was established. All

five task forces had purposes consistent with those most commonly cited in the literature as appropriate for temporary systems. All task forces were to some degree trying to provide direction or services for a larger organization. This took the form of developing a complex system (PPBES), developing curriculum (Consortium, French Project) and providing insight with respect to complex problems (Northland Study Group, Accreditation Task Force). These tasks are most appropriate for temporary systems. The induction of change is a key function of temporary systems and this was a noticeable concern for each of the five task forces studied. Miles (1964:443) claims that: "...permanent systems - whether persons, groups, or organizations - find it difficult to change themselves." Also, Thompson (1961:61) states that: "...a hierarchical system always favors the status quo." Each task force studied was successful in separating itself from the parent organization to some extent. The degree of this independence will be apparent in various discussions specific to characteristics of temporary systems.

In addition to formally stated purposes, several of the task forces had less visible, but equally important purposes. One task force (PPBES) was utilized to install a system that would provide greater financial control and, thus, provide some stabilization for the parent organization in times of concern over accountability. This was not a formally stated purpose. Two other task forces (Northland,

Accreditation) appeared, in part, to have political purposes, i.e., to satisfy a public that action was being taken on a certain issue. These less formal purposes of task forces are consistent with Miles' (1964) suggestion that temporary systems can be effective for maintaining, i.e., providing stability for, a larger organization.

The preceding discussion should not be misconstrued as suggesting that the major purpose of these task forces was system maintenance but only that, in some instances, this was one of several purposes. In fact, data were presented to show that members of all task forces generally accepted, both explicitly and implicitly, the formal goals of their task forces.

Another task demand relates to the clarity of guidelines for the task forces studied. This determines the degree to which a task force has to clarify its own guidelines.

Miles (1964:463) claims that well defined procedures are extremely important to members of a temporary system. Because members are dealing with many uncertainties, the procedures provide some measure of predictability, controlability, and compellingness. Miles (1964:464) suggests these three features: "...contribute strongly to the usefulness of temporary systems in bringing about innovation." In four of the task forces studied the guidelines were clear to members from the beginning. The exception was the PPBES Task Force. In this instance the

clarity of the guidelines differed from member to member. It appeared to take some time for the task force members to become a cohesive group. However, through clarification of guidelines and goal redefinition the members developed a strong personal and professional bond to the task force. This cohesiveness was strongest in the case of the PPBES Task Force.

Miles (1964:459) claims that although the goal of a temporary system is usually established at the inception of the temporary system, goal redefinition often serves to gain commitment from the membership. Goal redefinition also becomes a way in which a group can develop social skills. As a result of this goal redefinition members of a temporary group often feel a high sense of involvement, perhaps greater than any activity in a permanent organization (Goffman 1961). This appears to be the case with the PPBES Task Force to a great extent and the other task forces to a lesser degree. Also, members of the PPBES Task Force "often" had to deal with complex guidelines needing clarification, whereas, this was only "occasionally" or "seldom" the case with the other task forces.

The nature of the task is a task demand of importance with respect to temporary systems. Zand (1974) sees collateral organizations, a form of temporary system, as being best suited for dealing with ill-structured problems as opposed to routine tasks. Toffler (1970:135) concurs:

Traditional functional organization structures,

created to meet predictable non-novel conditions, prove incapable of responding effectively to radical changes in the environment.

In this regard, the task forces in the study appeared to have been effectively used. In all cases members of the task forces were "often" asked to deal with complex tasks or problems. According to Perrow (1972) routine problems are most efficiently dealt with by formal organizations. In the case of the task forces studied only one, i.e., Consortium Executive, "often" required members to deal with routine tasks or problems. Other task forces only "occasionally" required this of the membership.

The most distinguishing characteristic of task forces and temporary systems, in general, is the time limits placed on the membership. All members of the task forces in the study population were aware that the task force was of a temporary nature and would complete its work within a definite time span.

Bogue (1971:95) claims that all temporary systems must have a built-in self-destruct mechanism which is activated upon resolution. This time boundary can produce a clean slate effect and it allows members to concentrate their energies rather than pacing the workload. Members of the temporary systems in the study were "always" or "often" aware of the time limits that existed. In four of the task forces studied the effect of the time limits was increased productivity. This would appear to be the case in most time-bound systems providing the time limits are reasonable in

light of the task to be accomplished.

Resources

Steiner (1972:7) claims that resources:

...include all the relevant knowledge, abilities, skills, or tools possessed by the individuals who [are] attempting to perform the task...this determinant of productivity also includes the distribution of relevant resources among group members.

The membership of a task force, like any organization, is a key determinant of the success of the task force. The membership of each task force, with the exception of one person, consisted totally of professional educators. The minimum level of formal education in the study population was the bachelor's level. Over half the study population had received post graduate degrees. All persons had previously had teaching experience and over half the study population had previous administrative experience. Half of the study population had previous experience as members of a task force.

The size of the task force in each instance was deemed appropriate by the membership. The size ranged from three persons in the Northland Study Group to eight persons in the Junior High Mathematics Consortium Executive and the ATA Task Force Accreditation. No optimal size was established for a task force. This appeared to be contingent upon a number of other factors, e.g., the nature of the task, necessity for travel, and desire for representativeness. Key concerns expressed by the task force members when questioned

regarding appropriate task force size included the following: small enough so that all members can have input; small enough for close communication among the membership; small enough to make travel arrangements when this was required; large enough to include representation from interested factions; and, large enough to provide the various types of expertise necessary for task completion.

Further research should be initiated to look at the impact of group size on task force effectiveness. This would involve studying task forces of relatively large size in both clinical and natural settings.

This latter concern relating to task force size also relates to the mix of persons in the task force. The mix of persons was deemed appropriate for each task force. The members of two curriculum task forces, i.e., the Consortium and the French Project Steering Committee, as well as the ATA Task Force on Accreditation, all felt that involvement of persons from different levels of the system or organization was essential to the success of the task force.

Another characteristic of the membership of task forces studied was very high task orientation of the membership. In all cases members stated that they were "always" concerned about task accomplishment. This appears to have resulted from both the characteristics of the individuals selected for the task forces, as well as the situation in which they were placed. Further empirical work would appear justified to determine the impact that a highly task oriented

environment could have upon a person, who under other circumstances, might not be task oriented. The suggestion, of course, in the temporary systems literature is that the task oriented environment has a significant impact.

Respondents in each of the task force settings claimed that they were "often" adaptable and flexible with respect to change. This finding is consistent with the theories of Bennis (1966) and Toffler (1970) who claim that temporary systems are adaptable and flexible. Again, what portion of this adaptability and flexibility comes from the individuals themselves and what portion originates within the task force setting is worthy of future investigation.

With respect to established leadership for the task forces in question, an important finding emerged. Leadership in the case of the five task forces studied was "always" or "often" established when the task force was formulated. This appeared to be a key factor in setting direction for the task force. In spite of this established leadership, in three task forces other leaders emerged, depending upon the conditions in the task force. In the case of all five task forces the established leadership was perceived as being positive. With respect to future research on task forces, in particular, and temporary systems, in general, there would appear to be fruitful areas in which to further investigate contingency theories of leadership. For example, Fiedler's (1967) concept of organizational engineering would appear applicable in a temporary system. This matching of leaders

with situations could improve the effectiveness of temporary systems.

The access to information of various types is an important resource to any task force. The opportunity to circumvent the hierarchy in search of information is not often presented to members of a formal organization. Tannenbaum et al. (1974:6) claim that: "...in one form or another hierarchy remains, and it is likely to remain a manifest and important element of organizational structure." The types of information available to the five task forces were investigated in the study. When a decision was to be made, accurate and adequate information was "always" provided for members of two task forces and "often" provided for members of the other three. The sources for this information varied from task force to task force, but in all instances the expertise of the task force membership was an important source of information.

All task forces were able to get information directly from various levels of the parent organization. The strongest case of circumventing an hierarchical organization occurred with the PPBES Task Force. This was to be expected because the task force was of the pure type, i.e., it had a full time membership which had developed a strong sense of cohesiveness and autonomy. Miles (1964) claims that the characteristics of temporary systems will be strongest when the system is of the pure form.

During this portion of the investigation a key

ingredient of success of temporary systems was identified by a number of members of different task forces. This ingredient was executive commitment. Because the task force (temporary system) is in many respects separated from the formal organization, executive commitment from the top of the formal organization is essential to the health and legitimacy of the temporary system. This executive commitment allows access to various levels of the formal organization and combats linkage failure between this formal organization and the temporary system. In the cases of the five task forces executive commitment was formalized through special funding, official mandates, and the enhancement of increased social status for task force members.

According to Miles (1964), information overload is a characteristic of many temporary systems. This was not apparent in any of the five educational task forces studied. This finding suggests that information overload may be a less common characteristic than the literature suggests, at least with respect to temporary systems in education.

Process

Steiner (1972:8) claims process consists of the steps taken by a group when confronted with a task:

It includes all this intrapersonal and interpersonal actions by which people transform their resources into a product, and all those nonproductive actions that are prompted by frustration, competing motivations, or inadequate understanding.

The task group actions or process examined in this

study included decision making procedures, status relationships, communication patterns, energy expenditure, dysfunctional process, and group atmosphere of the task forces.

According to Bennis and Slater (1968:11) consensus management is an essential ingredient of an effective temporary system. Data collected in the five task forces are consistent with this assumption. In each case task force members "always" or "often" participated in decisions. Also, in each case the decision making process in the task force "always" or "often" encouraged teamwork. This teamwork was enhanced because "often," if not "always," equal status relationships developed in each of the task forces. Bogue (1971:95) claims that it is essential so that the authority of competence replaces the authority of position and role. This appeared to happen in the task forces studied and, in four out of five, different leaders "occasionally" or "often" emerged depending upon conditions in the task force. Only "occasionally" did a noticeable hierarchy exist within any of the task forces.

Seldom were decisions made for the task forces by someone outside the task force. This independence of decision making appears to be essential to the effective operation of a task force. It is because temporary systems have this independence that they can avoid the characteristics of bureaucracy, i.e., defined chain of command, procedures and rules, division of labour,

impersonality, life tenure, and fixed distribution of authority. For the most part, according to the human resource writers, e.g., MacGregor (1960), Argyris (1964), and Likert (1961 and 1967), that could account for their effectiveness.

Communication within temporary systems, and between temporary systems and the environment, is a variable of considerable importance. Bogue (1971:95) suggests that temporary systems offer "short-circuit" channels of communication rather than the carefully contained vertical patterns of hierarchy. The five task forces in this study exemplified open and effective communication networks. Regardless of the diversity of membership the communication within each task force was perceived by the membership as being very good or excellent. Miles (1964:467-468) suggests three reasons for this open and effective communication within temporary systems. Firstly, communication to groups outside the system is decreased and a common language tends to grow up within the group; secondly, formal hierarchical roles are not retained by members of the temporary system; and thirdly, increased interaction causes members to become more open and trustful. The communication patterns within the five task forces studied were consistent with the preceding theory.

This very close communication pattern within temporary systems can become dysfunctional when communication with external groups is essential. Miles (1964:482) states:

Because the members of the temporary system are usually isolated from the surrounding environment, and communicate more with each other than with permanent systems, they tend to become alienated, detached, uninvolved.

Communication between the five task forces and external groups or organizations varied in effectiveness from case to case. The PPBES Task Force experienced some difficulty in communicating with some levels of the Department of Education and some of the member systems. Also, to a lesser degree the French Project Steering Committee had some problems communicating their ideas to the French teachers in the system. In this latter case the problem was virtually eliminated by extensive discussions with the French teachers over a period of time. A similar strategy, though less intensive, was attempted by the PPBES Task Force. Because of the fact that the PPEES Task Force had full time members the cohesiveness of the group was more intensive and, thus, linkage failure with outside groups more likely.

In the case of the other three task forces communication with outside agencies did not appear to be a problem. In each case these task forces had individuals who worked both within the task force and at the same time were working in the parent organization or member system. These persons acted as boundary spanners and virtually eliminated the communication gap between the task force and other key organizations. This factor has practical relevance for the establishment of effective temporary systems.

Process in temporary systems is affected by the amount

of energy the members are willing to put into task accomplishment. According to Miles (1964) effortfulness is a characteristic of the membership of temporary systems. In four of the five task forces respondents stated that they "often" expended more energy as a member of their task force than in a regular work setting.

This was "occasionally" the case in the fifth task force. The strongest evidence of increased energy expenditure occurred in the FPBES Task Force where members were full time task force workers.

Dysfunctional process was rare in the task forces studied. This accounted, perhaps, for their effectiveness. Unrealistic goal setting occurred "occasionally" in three task forces and "seldom" in the other two. Support was not found for the literature which suggests that this is a common occurrence for temporary system membership.

The data collected in the study were examined closely for any indications of the groupthink phenomenon. This post hoc analysis utilized Janis' (1972) symptoms as indicators of groupthink. These symptoms; i.e., illusion of invulnerability, rationalization, belief of group morality, stereotyped views of outsiders, suppression of ingroup dissent, self-censorship, illusion of unanimity, and self appointed mindguards; were described in greater detail in Chapter 2.

Generally, the characteristics of groupthink were not apparent in the task forces studied. The reasons for this

could be two fold. Firstly, task forces, by virtue of their time bound nature, seem to mitigate against groupthink. Janis (1972) claims that a key prerequisite for the development of groupthink is members' desire to remain within the group indefinitely. This desire manifests itself in self-censorship by the membership. However, in a task force setting all members, by definition, continue their tenure until the group formally dissolves.

A second possibility for the absence of groupthink relates to specific characteristics of those particular task forces studied. In all cases members reported that they were able to express dissenting viewpoints without endangering their personal relationships with other members or their security in the task force. The formal leadership was also open to diverse opinion. No attempts were made by the formal hierarchy of the parent organizations to direct or influence the actions or conclusions of the task forces. In addition, all task force members solicited opinions from outside their ranks. These characteristics, present in the task forces studied, are cited by Janis (1972:209-219) as being key prescriptions for the reduction and elimination of groupthink.

The preceding analysis cannot be termed conclusive but does suggest that examination of task forces and other temporary systems, with respect to their potential for reducing groupthink, may be worthwhile. Further research in this area is recommended.

According to the literature certain sentiments tend to be shared by members of temporary systems. These include esprit de corps (Bryce 1973, Bennis 1966, Miles 1964), interpersonal liking (Miles 1964), and playfulness (Bryce 1973, Miles 1964). The group atmosphere that develops in a task force can account in part for some of these sentiments. According to Fiedler's (1967) scale the group atmosphere could be considered good in three of the task forces studied and very good in the case of a fourth task force. In one task force the group atmosphere was less than good. In the latter case, i.e., the Northland Study Group, group members appeared to use the group atmosphere scale to express displeasure with the way the results of their work had been dealt with subsequent to their completion of the task. During interviews members of this task force expressed displeasure with the lack of action by the Department of Education with respect to their recommendations. This could account for low scores on the Group Atmosphere Scale on items relating to productivity, success, acceptance, and satisfaction. In the case of the French project task force the "very good" group atmosphere may have had several causes. This task force was totally composed of classroom teachers who regarded task force work as a pleasant change of pace. They enjoyed working with other adults and with content aimed at a broader population, i.e., various grade levels. The task force setting appeared to be a more novel environment for these teachers than was the case for members

of other task forces. As a result "Hawthorne effect" may have been quite predominant in this instance. This conclusion is in need of future empirical verification.

Productivity

Productivity refers to the actual outcomes which result from task demands, resources, and process. Elements of productivity examined in this study include task accomplishment, i.e., the degree to which purposes were achieved, and member satisfaction. Less direct outcomes such as career pattern changes, job security, and professional growth were also investigated.

According to the documentation available all five task forces studied achieved their major formal purpose. Specific statements for each case are provided in the preceding chapters.

Each task force did achieve a task in a prespecified amount of time. In the case of all task forces the purpose, to provide direction for a larger organization, was partially achieved. Generally speaking, all five task forces were successful in completion of the task assigned to them. Further to this, it was the general opinion of most respondents that the task force mode was more appropriate than a regular hierarchy could have been. This finding supports the literature which outlines the most appropriate functions for temporary systems (Miles 1964, Bennis and Slater 1968, Bogue 1971, and Zand 1974). There appears to be a definite type of activity for which temporary systems

appear appropriate. This aspect is discussed in the concluding section of this chapter.

Another aspect of productivity which was investigated in the study concerns the satisfaction of task force members. In the case of all five task forces, members were generally satisfied, in the task force setting. This satisfaction level was also the case in the regular work setting of the respondents. In one instance, i.e., the French Project Steering Committee, the satisfaction level in the task force setting was considerably higher than the level found in the regular work setting. Reasons for this finding could relate to those expressed previously with respect to the group atmosphere of that particular task force. The task force mode appears to be a very effective means of providing classroom teachers with personal satisfaction, as well as for accomplishing particular tasks.

A number of trends appearing in various subscales of the satisfaction measure for individual task forces were noted in previous chapters. None of these trends consistently appeared across the five task forces.

Data in this study provide evidence to support Bennis (1966), in that members were satisfied to work in task forces, however, with the exception of the French Project Steering Committee, there was no evidence to suggest that respondents were more satisfied in a task force setting than in a regular work setting.

Other personal outcomes can result from participation

in a temporary system. Job security can be a concern for members of a time-bound system. Job security was "never" a concern in four of the five task forces. This could be anticipated since all these task forces were made up of persons who maintained regular positions while working on a task force. On the other hand members of PPBES Task Force had considerable concern about job security following completion of the task. Data indicated that members of this task force were "often" concerned about job security following completion of the task. Since all members of this task force worked in a full time capacity this concern seems reasonable. The concern over job security became dysfunctional as the task neared completion.

This finding has implications for practical use of temporary systems. The increased intensity of commitment received from full time task force members may be negated by concerns over job security unless these concerns are planned and accounted for when a temporary system is being inaugurated.

Another outcome of a task force relates to the impact of the experience on subsequent career patterns. Approximately 40 percent of all respondents stated that their experience in the task force could potentially have a positive impact with respect to their subsequent career patterns. The major reasons cited for this were increased visibility, improved process, or interaction skills, and increased technical skills in a particular field. The clean

slate effect, which often occurs in a temporary system, appeared to allow members of the five task forces an opportunity to excel beyond that normally provided in a regular hierarchy.

The final productivity measure in the study related to the professional growth of the task force members. Approximately 90 percent of the respondents in the study claimed they grew professionally as a result of their experience in a temporary system.

The five task forces provided examples of successful temporary systems. Generally these task forces exhibited many of the characteristics associated with temporary systems in the literature. Generally the characteristics were strongest in the pure case, i.e., where the membership was working in the task force on a full time basis. The exceptions, i.e., where task forces did not exhibit the characteristics of temporary systems, provide areas worthy of future research. With respect to utility, the task forces were found effective in achieving both their formal and informal purposes. Generally, respondents felt that the task force mode was the optimal organizational form for completion of their particular tasks.

IDEAL TASK FORCES

This section of the chapter deals with perceptions of respondents regarding ideal task forces. Members of each task force were asked to complete a section of a questionnaire which asked for their opinions regarding the

importance of various characteristics to an effective task force. These characteristics were derived from the literature on temporary systems. The respondents (n=27) all had recent experience in a task force setting and were treated as a "panel of experts" on the subject.

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of certain characteristics to the process and outcome of an effective task force. Process referred to the procedures of a task force and outcome referred to the result produced by a task force. For the purposes of the questionnaire respondents were asked to think of an "ideal" task force.

Table 9.1 contains data which illustrate the relative importance of twelve characteristics of an ideal task force. Means were calculated using the following scale: 5=extremely important; 4=quite important; 3=somewhat important; 2=slightly important; and 1=not important.

Data in Table 9.1 illustrate that a number of characteristics could be considered "extremely" important to both the process and outcome of a task force. These characteristics included: members' concern about task accomplishment; participation in decision making; and, the expertise of the membership. Human relations skills and membership adaptability were considered "extremely" important to the process and "quite" important to the outcome of a task force.

A number of characteristics were considered "quite" important to both the process and outcome of a task force.

Table 9.1

Respondents' Perceptions of the Importance
of Various Characteristics in
Ideal Task Forces (n=27)

| CHARACTERISTIC | PROCESS | | OUTCOME | |
|--|---------|------|---------|------|
| | sum | mean | sum | mean |
| 1. members concern about task accomplishment | 123 | 4.56 | 133 | 4.93 |
| 2. clear guidelines | 119 | 4.41 | 121 | 4.48 |
| 3. definite lines of authority | 91 | 3.37 | 96 | 3.56 |
| 4. participation in decision making | 127 | 4.70 | 122 | 4.52 |
| 5. input from a larger system | 105 | 3.89 | 110 | 4.07 |
| 6. expertise of members | 122 | 4.52 | 129 | 4.78 |
| 7. human relations skills | 125 | 4.63 | 114 | 4.22 |
| 8. formal leadership | 102 | 3.78 | 97 | 3.59 |
| 9. adaptability of membership | 122 | 4.52 | 108 | 4.00 |
| 10. job security for membership | 62 | 2.30 | 58 | 2.15 |
| 11. time deadlines | 111 | 4.11 | 114 | 4.22 |
| 12. formal communication channels | 106 | 3.93 | 103 | 3.81 |
| 5=extremely important; 4=quite important; 3=somewhat important; 2=slightly important; 1=not important. | | | | |

These characteristics included: clear guidelines; input from a larger system; formal leadership; time deadlines; and formal communications channels. Definite lines of authority were considered only "somewhat" important to the process but "quite" important to the outcome of a task force.

Job security of the membership was considered only "slightly" important to the process and outcome of a task force. This finding did not coincide with findings in Chapter 4 relating to the PPBES Task Force, i.e., a pure task force, where job security was an apparent concern.

Generally the respondents verified that the major characteristics attributed to temporary systems in the literature are important for effective processes and outcomes of a task force. These characteristics should be considered seriously when administrators are setting up task forces in education.

An effort was made to explore further the potential utility of task forces in education. In an interview setting all task force members were asked to speculate regarding the types of work for which task forces could be effective in an educational setting.

General uses for which task forces could be effective were numerous. The most often cited use was for developmental activities. Respondents felt that task forces could provide a creative means of developing new materials, policies, and procedures. One respondent stated:

Task forces are effective for developmental tasks that can be reasonably well defined and in which a product can be conceptualized in the beginning.

A considerable number of respondents suggested that task forces were change oriented and were effective tools for bringing about organizational change. For example:

A task force can penetrate a formal organization

that is not totally committed to a particular change...task forces do not allow things to get ignored.

The thing about a task force, its recommendations are going to be listened to.

Other potential effective uses for task forces include policy development, research, and developing a position on issue-centered problems. Task forces should produce a tangible outcome. All members were opposed to the use of task forces for routine problems. The use of task forces to delay a decision was considered possible but unethical by one respondent.

The most common practical use for task forces was seen as curriculum development where involvement of practitioners was seen as a key concern. When involvement of persons from various organizations or from various levels within an organization is essential to solve a problem, then the task force mode was seen as the optimal mode.

The preceding responses regarding the potential utility of task forces are worthy of the consideration of administrators at all levels within the educational setting.

PRESCRIPTIONS FOR AN EFFECTIVE TASK FORCE

The following prescriptive statements, derived from this research, may be used as a guide for practitioners. It is suggested that the full potential of the task force as a mode of operation may be realized through adherence to these guidelines.

1. A task force should have a clearly defined mission.

This mission, should be of a developmental, or problem solving nature. Routine tasks are not appropriate for a task force.

2. Task force members should be encouraged to redefine the task force goals.

3. Time limits should be placed on the task force. These limits should allow sufficient, but not excessive, time for task completion.

4. Task force members must be provided with adequate funds, materials, and equipment.

5. The size of the task force should be minimized to the extent possible. Additional members may be added if the task proves to be more extensive than was initially anticipated.

6. Task force members should possess group process skills as well as expertise in the task area. If this is not the case at the outset, time and resources should be provided for members to develop these essential competencies.

7. The task force should receive senior executive commitment from the parent organization. Both formal and informal commitment is essential.

8. The task force should be permitted open and direct access to necessary information held by the parent organization.

9. Consideration should be given, in the preliminary stages of task force establishment, to possible alternative

methods for implementation or dissemination of the task force product. This consideration should include an awareness of the "political" realities involved in any implementation phase.

10. The task force should have a formally appointed leader. This person must have competent process skills. The individual must allow other leaders to emerge depending upon conditions in the task force.

11. At least one member of the task force should be formally associated with the parent organization. This will help to avoid possible linkage failure.

12. The task force should have access to an outside body, e.g., advisory group, whose function would be to react to ideas presented by members of the task force. Acting as a boundary spanning body between the task force and the environment, the advisory group would aid in the elimination of groupthink.

13. Decision making procedures within the task force should be participative in nature. Operating procedures should be determined by the task force membership and not imposed by the parent organization. However, the operating procedures should not include formal division of labor.

14. The mandate given the task force should be formalized and recorded.

15. At each meeting of the task force one member should be appointed "resident skeptic". This procedure is suggested to avoid both groupthink and change for the sake of change.

16. Prior experience in the task force mode should not be a major criterion for the selection of task force members. Skills will be quickly learned. Persons new to task force work will tend to be highly task oriented and productive.

17. All task force members should be committed to task completion within the time lines stated.

18. When possible, job security should be assured for members of full-time task forces.

19. Appropriate recognition and visibility for task force members should be provided following completion of the task.

20. The developmental phase (task force) and implementation or dissemination phase should be linked together. This can be accomplished by having one or more task force members involved in implementation. However, the task force should be formally disbanded prior to the implementation phase as this is not usually an appropriate function of a task force.

SUMMARY

Chapter 9 contains two major sections. The first of these contains a generalizing case analysis. In this section the five task forces presented in Chapters 4 to 8 were compared, contrasted, and interpreted in light of the characteristics of temporary systems found in the literature. This was done for the purpose of completing study task 4 as stated in Chapter 1. The task was restated

as follows: to determine the perceived impact of the characteristics attributed to temporary systems in the literature on the effectiveness of the particular temporary system and on temporary systems, in general. The generalizing analysis discusses the five task forces under the headings of task demands, resources, process, and productivity.

The second major section of the chapter deals with the perceptions of respondents regarding ideal task forces. Important characteristics of effective task forces, as perceived by the respondents, were reported. Generally the respondents verified that the major characteristics attributed to temporary systems in the literature are important for effective processes and outcomes of a task force. Potential uses for task forces in education were also reported.

The final section of the chapter contains a prescriptive list of characteristics essential to an effective task force.

Chapter 10

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

A summary of the study, including a restatement of the study purpose and tasks, the research methodology used, and a review of the major findings and conclusions is presented in the first section of the chapter. The second section contains implications of findings for the practice of educational administration, and recommendations for further research.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Restatement of the Study Purpose

The study examined a limited number of temporary systems with particular emphasis on their utility, both actual and potential, as an organizational arrangement in education.

Specific Tasks

The specific tasks necessary for the fulfilment of this purpose were to:

1. describe in detail five temporary systems with respect to specific characteristics attributed to temporary systems in the literature on organizations;
2. determine the perceived purpose for which each of the temporary systems in question was established;
3. determine the perceived effectiveness of each temporary system in achieving its purpose(s);
4. determine the perceived impact of the characteristics described as a result of task 1 (above), on

the effectiveness of the temporary system;

5. examine the perceived direct and indirect effects of each temporary system on its membership.

Research Methodology

A frame of reference, developed from the literature, provided the context under which the study was completed. The study could be described as a series of case studies. The case method was deemed appropriate because of the exploratory nature of the study.

Following an initial survey of five educational organizations in the Province of Alberta, five temporary systems of the task force variety were selected for indepth analysis. The five task forces were the Planning Programming Budgeting and Evaluation System (PPBES) Task Force of the Alberta Department of Education, the Junior High School Mathematics Consortium of the Edmonton Public School District, the Northland Study Group of the Alberta Department of Education, the Alberta Teachers' Association Task Force on Accreditation, and the French Project Steering Committee of the Strathcona County school system. The study population included all members of each of these task forces.

A questionnaire (Appendix A) designed specifically for the study was developed from the literature pertaining to temporary systems. A semi-structured open ended interview guide was also developed in the same manner. Both instruments were refined by means of a pilot study. All

members of the study population completed a questionnaire and responded in an interview setting. Frequency counts and means were used to present and analyse the data generated by the questionnaire.

Data obtained during the study were categorized using a conceptual framework devised by Steiner (1972). This conceptual framework included categories labelled task demands, resources, process, and productivity.

Review of Findings

The information reported in Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 relates to study tasks 1, 2, 3, and 5. Conclusions are drawn in Chapter 9 where a generalizing analysis of the five cases is presented. In addition, Chapter 9 contains data which relate to members' perceptions of the characteristics of effective task forces and their potential utility, i.e., study task 4. A summary of findings for each of these chapters follows.

Summary - Chapter 4

The PPBES Task Force was established:

...to develop a foundation for a system of making decisions about resource allocations for the purpose of assisting decision makers in providing a more efficient and effective learning environment for studies (Riffel et al. 1972:3).

A number of task demands were placed upon the task force. Three purposes, consistent with those ascribed to temporary systems in the literature, were found to be "extremely" important to members of the PPBES Task Force.

The formal goals of the PPBES Task Force were "always" found to be acceptable, both explicitly and implicitly, by the task force membership, however, the clarity of guidelines differed from member to member and these guidelines were "often" seen as complex and in need of clarification by the membership. Also, members of the PPBES Task Force were "often" asked to deal with complex tasks or problems.

Time limits were found to increase productivity in the task force. Members claimed they were "often" aware of the existence of these time limits.

The resources available to the PPBES Task Force were considerable. The membership was a highly educated, task oriented group of four persons. Formal leadership was established for the task force at the outset and members were "always" aware of it.

Accurate and adequate information was "often" provided for task force members. This information came from several sources and was available without task force members having to go through the normal bureaucratic channels of the Department of Education.

The PPBES Task Force was accorded high priority and had ample funding, as well as executive commitment from the upper levels of the Department of Education.

A number of process variables were examined in the context of the PPBES Task Force. The task force exhibited considerable autonomy in decision making, however, many decisions were checked with outside persons before action

occurred.

Equal status relationships developed among task force members and communication within the task force was open and effective. The group atmosphere was good. Some communication problems existed between the PFBES Task Force and outside agencies. Linkage failure was apparent in some dealings with the Department of Education.

Respondents claimed that more energy was expended in the task force setting than under most other working conditions.

The productivity of the PFBES Task Force was examined. The respondents perceived that the major purpose of the task force had been "fully" achieved and that a number of other purposes had been "partially" achieved.

Members were "satisfied" with their work in the task force. Job security was a concern of members following completion of the task a number of other personal outcomes resulted from participation in the PFBES Task Force. Members' career patterns were positively affected as a result of increased visibility, improved process and technical skills, and heightened credibility. Professional growth on the part of the membership was also an outcome of the task force.

Summary - Chapter 5

The Junior High School Mathematics Consortium was a two year project in cooperative curriculum development involving 20 Alberta school systems. The executive for the Consortium

was responsible for coordinating the activities of all Consortium members in an effort to achieve specific objectives. A number of task demands were placed upon members of the Consortium Executive. Members considered that it was "extremely" important to accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time. Two other purposes, consistent with those of temporary systems, were considered "quite" important. The formal goals of the Consortium were "often" implicitly accepted and almost "always" explicitly accepted by the Executive members. Also, guidelines were clear to Executive members. In this task force members were "often" asked to deal with routine tasks and only "occasionally" asked to deal with complex task or issues.

Members of the Consortium Executive were "always" aware of the time limits placed upon them. This appeared to increase productivity.

The resources of the Consortium Executive were examined. The eight members represented a well educated, highly experienced group. The size of the Executive and mix of persons were deemed appropriate for the task. Executive members were "always" concerned about task accomplishment and considered themselves to be adaptable and flexible. Formal leadership was established at the outset and members were "always" aware of it.

At a decision point accurate and adequate information was "often" provided. The sources for this information differed. Information overload was not a characteristic

apparent to the Consortium Executive.

Funding for the project was adequate. Initial frustration was experienced in obtaining funds from the Department of Education.

With respect to process within the Consortium Executive a number of variables were examined. Considerable autonomy was apparent with respect to decision making. Members participated in decisions and this encouraged teamwork. Equal status relationships developed in the Executive, however, "occasionally" an hierarchy was apparent.

Communication was generally open and effective among Executive members. The group atmosphere was good. This was also true of communication between the Executive and member school systems. Opinion was divided with respect to the quality of communication with the Department of Education.

Respondents claimed that they "often" expended more energy as members of the Executive than in a regular work setting.

The productivity of the Consortium Executive was examined. The Executive "fully" achieved their task in a prespecified amount of time. It was also concluded that the task could not have been accomplished as effectively by a regular hierarchical organization. Executive members were "satisfied" with work in the task force setting. Professional growth and potential career pattern changes were personal outcomes resulting from participation in the Consortium Executive.

Summary of Chapter 6

The Northland Study Group was a one year task force established by order of the Minister of Education for Alberta. The major objective of the Study Group was:

...to study and conduct an overall review and appraisal of the functions, administration, operation, and services of the Northland School Division No. 61.

Certain task demands were placed upon the Study Group. An "extremely" important purpose of the Study Group was to provide direction for a larger organization. Other purposes compatible with those attributed to temporary systems in the literature were found to be "quite" important.

The formal goals of the task force were accepted and the guidelines were clear. Members of the Study Group were "often" asked to deal with complex tasks or problems. The time provided was reasonable for the task and members were "always" aware of the time limits placed on the project.

Certain resources were available to the Northland Study Group. The membership was a highly educated group with considerable experience in the field of education. The size of the task force and the mix of people were deemed appropriate for the task. The Study Group members were task oriented, as well as adaptable, and flexible. Formal leadership was "always" available to the Study Group. Sufficient funds were also provided for the Study Group to complete its task.

Accurate and adequate information was "often" provided

for Study Group members. The source of this information varied. Information overload did not occur with the Study Group.

Process variables were examined in the context of the Northland Study Group. Decision making procedures were participative in nature and this encouraged teamwork. Members had equal status in the group with respect to decision making, however, a noticeable hierarchy "often" existed. The Study Group was an autonomous decision making body.

Communication among task force members was very good. Communication was also good with the parent organization and no linkage failure existed. Some communication problems existed when the Study Group dealt with native people in Northland School Division.

The group atmosphere of the Study Group was less than good. This appeared to result from a concern over the way recommendations were dealt with by the Department of Education and not from problems of interaction among Study Group members.

The productivity of the Study Group was examined. The purpose to provide direction for a larger organization was partially achieved. In terms of accomplishing a task in a prespecified amount of time, i.e., producing a report, members felt this had been "fully" achieved. The study was perceived as being more effective than a regular hierarchical organization could have been in accomplishing

the task.

Members of the Study Group were "satisfied" with their work in the task force setting. They also developed personally and professionally as a result of the experience.

Summary - Chapter 7

The Alberta Teachers' Association Task Force on Accreditation was set up in the fall of 1973 for the purpose of studying various facets of accreditation as it existed in Alberta and recommending policy and executive action relating to accreditation.

Several task demands were placed upon the task force. An "extremely" important purpose of the task force was to provide direction for a larger organization. The task force had other "quite" important purposes consistent with those most commonly attributed to temporary systems in the literature. The formal goals were accepted by the membership and the guidelines were clearly established. Members were "often" asked to deal with complex tasks or problems. The time limits were considered sufficient for the task and members were "often" aware of those time limits.

The resources available to the Accreditation Task Force were considerable. The membership consisted of eight well educated, highly experienced individuals. The size and mix of persons were deemed appropriate for the task. Members were highly task oriented and were adaptable and flexible. Formal leadership was established in the task force from the beginning.

Accurate and adequate information was "always" provided for task force members at a decision point. The source of this information varied. Ample funding was also provided by the parent organization.

An important process of the task force was decision making. Members "always" participated in decisions and this encouraged teamwork. Equal status relationships developed in the task force and members "often" expended more energy in the task force setting than in a regular work setting.

Communication within the task force was good and the group atmosphere was good. No linkage failure existed between the task force and the parent organization.

The productivity of the task force included the achievement of purposes. Two important purposes were "fully" achieved, namely, to accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time and to provide services to help a larger organization.

Members were "satisfied" in the task force setting. Other personal outcomes included professional growth and potential career pattern changes.

Summary - Chapter 8

The Strathcona County French Project Steering Committee was a four member task force established in 1976 to develop a realistic curriculum plan which would include a rationale, goals, specific objectives, teaching strategies, and evaluation procedures for each French course offered.

Some task demands placed on the Steering Committee

relate to purposes. An "extremely" important purpose for the Steering Committee was to provide direction for a larger organization. A number of other purposes consistent with those often ascribed to temporary systems were also considered "quite" important by the membership. The goals of the Steering Committee were accepted by the membership and the guidelines were considered clear. Members of the task force were "often" asked to deal with complex tasks or problems. Members were "always" aware of the time limits placed on the project and this appeared to increase productivity.

The resources available to the Steering Committee included the membership. The four members were teachers with considerable experience in the classroom. Three members had previous experience in a task force setting. The size and mix of persons were deemed appropriate for the task. The members were highly task oriented, as well as being adaptable and flexible. Formal leadership was "often" provided by an outside curriculum consultant.

Information overload was not apparent in the task force. Adequate and accurate information was "always" provided for members of the task force. The source of this information varied. Adequate funding was also provided for the project.

Decision making is a key process variable. The Steering Committee had considerable autonomy in decision making. The decision making style was participative and this encouraged

teamwork. Members had equal status in the task force and different leaders "often" emerged depending upon conditions in the task force. Communication within the Steering Committee was "excellent" and the group atmosphere was very good. Communication between the task force members and French teachers in the system was frank and open. This helped to avoid linkage failure.

The productivity of the Steering Committee included the achievement of purposes. The Steering Committee was "quite" successful in providing direction for a larger organization and accomplishing a task in a prespecified amount of time. The task force was perceived to be more effective than a regular hierarchical organization could have been.

Steering Committee members were "satisfied" in the task force setting more so than in their regular work setting. Professional growth was another personal outcome resulting from participation in the Steering Committee.

Summary and Conclusions - Chapter 9

This chapter contains a generalizing analysis of the five task forces in the study. All the task forces were found to be effective for achieving their formal and informal purposes. As predicted by the literature, clarity of guidelines was important to the success of the task forces. The task forces were found effective for dealing with ill-structured problems, as opposed to routine tasks. Nonroutine tasks were found to be appropriate for the task force mode.

Time limits appear to increase productivity in task forces. The members should always be aware of the time limits under which they are working. Sufficient, but not excessive, time should be allowed for task forces to complete their work.

Professional educators were found to be effective task force members. Previous experience in a task force setting did not appear to be an advantage. Process skills appear to be readily learned in a task force setting.

Various sizes of task forces can be effective depending upon the task and the task orientation of the membership. The task force should be small enough to allow input from all members, small enough to develop close communication, and small enough to easily arrange meetings, but large enough to represent important factions. Successful task force members appear to be highly task oriented, as well as being adaptable and flexible.

Formal leadership appears to be important in setting direction for a task force. Accurate and adequate information must be provided to task force members. Without this, task forces will become dysfunctional and create new problems for the parent organization. An important information source for any task force is the expertise of its membership. If members do not have expertise in the area being dealt with by the task force they should be given the opportunity to gain experience within the time limits set for the task force. Information overload should be watched

for and avoided.

Task forces can and will circumvent the regular hierarchy of the parent organization. This should be anticipated and viewed as functional. Also, executive commitment from the top of the parent organization is important to the success of a task force. This legitimates the task force and gives it credibility. Adequate funding must also be provided.

Participative decision making styles are most appropriate in a task force setting, as is open communication and a good group atmosphere. Linkage failure can be avoided by having a person designated as a boundary spanner between the task force and the parent organization. Communication gaps will exist between the task force and outside agencies. Considerable effort is required by task force members if this is to be overcome.

Groupthink does not appear to be a concern in educational task forces, nor does unrealistic goal setting.

Task forces are highly productive. A task force should not be struck unless the parent organization is prepared to take some action based on the results of the task force effort. Task forces will provide satisfaction and professional growth for the membership. Also, in some cases, task forces can provide an individual member with the necessary visibility to acquire a promotion. Full time task forces can cause concern for membership over job security. Proper planning can stop this from becoming dysfunctional.

Characteristics attributed to temporary systems in the literature were generally found to be important characteristics of effective task forces in education. With respect to utility, the task forces were found effective in achieving both their formal and informal purposes. Generally, respondents felt that the task force mode was the optimal organizational form for completion of their particular tasks.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Implications

The study has implications for educational administrators. Task forces in education can be important administrative tools when utilized effectively. The task force used to supplement and complement bureaucracy appears appropriate in education at most levels, i.e., from the short term, in-school task force on discipline to the multi-system curriculum task force. The task force is a powerful tool that can provide high quality solutions to complex, nonroutine problems. This mode also lends itself to developmental activities when creativity is desired. The developmental nature of the educational process itself makes the task force a logical tool for educators to use.

In addition to task forces other forms of temporary systems appear appropriate for educational organizations. Teaching teams, pupil-pupil learning activities, fixed term appointments, professional development conferences, and counselor-pupil relationships are all forms of temporary

systems. The use of such systems should be monitored in the light of temporary systems theory. This should be done in an effort to make most effective use of our resources for the ultimate improvement of the educative process.

The educational administrator should use the findings contained in the concluding section of Chapter 9 in a prescriptive sense. This should insure reasonable success in the utilization of a task force, specifically, and temporary systems, in general.

Another implication of the study is that the instrumentation developed for the study could be used in revised form to evaluate the effectiveness of various task forces within an educational setting. Also, the findings of the study could be tested with other temporary systems in education and the potential utility of these systems clarified.

The educational administrator with an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of various types of temporary systems can use this mode of organization to enhance his own effectiveness and, thus, the effectiveness of his organization.

Recommendations

Because of the process and results of this study, several recommendations for further research are presented:

1. Further studies of other types of temporary systems in education should be encouraged. Because of their developmental nature, temporary systems are compatible with

education at all levels, from pupil learning to system wide change. Further knowledge regarding effective temporary systems could improve the educational process.

2. A broad survey that would attempt to determine the extent of usage of temporary systems in the province/country would help identify areas for more in depth study.

3. The applicability of Fiedler's (1967) concept of organizational engineering to the theory of temporary systems should be tested.

4. The effectiveness of task forces appears to provide support for human resources theory. This concept should be developed and tested.

5. Impure forms of temporary systems, e.g., fixed term appointments, should be examined with a view to measuring their effectiveness and potential.

6. Aspects of small group theory developed by psychologists in clinical experiments could be verified through application to real life groups such as task forces using the case study method.

7. Satisfaction levels of persons in task force settings and regular work settings should be investigated using a statistically controlled research design.

8. Temporary systems should be examined as a possible means of mitigating against groupthink.

9. Further research should be initiated to examine the impact of task force size on effectiveness. The effects of large size on the completion of various tasks should be

examined in both clinical and real life situations.

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Appendix A

TEMPORARY SYSTEMS QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine the attitudes and opinions of selected educators toward their activities as members of a temporary system. The specific temporary system referred to in this questionnaire is the Planning Programming Budgeting and Evaluation System (PPBES) Task Force of which you were a member. The questionnaire deals with the activities and processes of the PPBES Task Force and is not concerned with the specific content of PPBES, nor is it concerned with the implementation phase of the project.

The data collected during this study will be used to examine features of temporary systems, in general, and not to study the specific outcomes of the particular task force.

For the purposes of this questionnaire a temporary system (task force) is defined as an organizational form designed to complete a task, solve a problem or bring about a condition. The system from its inception is known to be of limited duration and the criteria for dissolution are known to the membership.

The data collected will be treated anonymously and confidentiality will be observed.

Thank you for your assistance.

SECTION A

PERSONAL DATA

1. Age (as of January 1, 1977):

- | | | |
|-----------|-----------|-----------------|
| (1) 20-25 | (4) 35-39 | (7) 50-54 |
| (2) 25-29 | (5) 40-44 | (8) 55-59 |
| (3) 30-34 | (6) 45-49 | (9) 60 and over |

()

2. Sex: Female (1) Male (2)

()

3. How many years experience do you have as a professional educator? (Count the present year as a full year.)

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| (1) under 2 years | (4) 11-15 Years |
| (2) 2-5 years | (5) 16-20 years |
| (3) 6-10 years | (6) over 20 years |

()

4. What was the highest level of formal education you had attained when you became a member of the PPBES Task Force?

- (1) high school graduate
- (2) 1-2 years university or equivalent
- (3) 3-4 years university or equivalent
- (4) Bachelors degree
- (5) Masters degree
- (6) Doctorate

()

5. How many years experience did you have as a professional educator when you joined the PPBES Task Force?

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| (1) under 2 years | (4) 11-15 years |
| (2) 2-5 years | (5) 16-20 years |
| (3) 6-10 years | (6) over 20 years |

()

6. Was the PPBES Task Force the first full or part-time task force of which you were a member?

- (1) yes (2) no

()

7. How many full or part-time task forces had you been a member of prior to your work on the PPBES Task Force?

- | | | |
|-------|-----------------|----------|
| (1) 1 | (4) 4 | (7) none |
| (2) 2 | (5) 5 | |
| (3) 3 | (6) more than 5 | |

()

8. How many full or part-time task forces have you been a member of since your work on the PPBES Task Force?

- | | | |
|-------|-----------------|----------|
| (1) 1 | (4) 4 | (7) none |
| (2) 2 | (5) 5 | |
| (3) 3 | (6) more than 5 | |

()

9. When you joined the PPBES Task Force were you aware that it was of a temporary nature and would complete its work within a definite time span?

- | | |
|---------|--------|
| (1) yes | (2) no |
|---------|--------|

()

SECTION B

PURPOSES

With respect to the PPBES Task Force rate the importance of these PURPOSES and the extent to which they were achieved.

| PURPOSE | IMPORTANCE | ACHIEVEMENT |
|---------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| | (1) extremely important | (1) fully achieved |
| | (2) quite important | |
| | (3) somewhat important | (2) partially achieved |
| | (4) slightly important | |
| | (5) not important | (3) not achieved |
| | | (4) inapplicable |

| PURPOSE | IMPORTANCE () | ACHIEVEMENT () |
|---|----------------|-----------------|
| 10. to accomplish a task in a prespecified amount of time | | |

| PURPOSE | IMPORTANCE () | ACHIEVEMENT () |
|--|----------------|-----------------|
| 11. to bring about a change in individual behavior | | |

| PURPOSE | IMPORTANCE () | ACHIEVEMENT () |
|---|----------------|-----------------|
| 12. to reeducate or retrain the members of the task force | | |

| PURPOSE | IMPORTANCE () | ACHIEVEMENT () |
|---|----------------|-----------------|
| 13. to make plans to reeducate or retrain an individual or group outside the task force | | |

| PURPOSE | IMPORTANCE () | ACHIEVEMENT () |
|--|----------------|-----------------|
| 14. to provide members of the task force with new skills | | |

| PURPOSE | IMPORTANCE () | ACHIEVEMENT () |
|---|----------------|-----------------|
| 15. to make plans to provide persons outside the task force with new skills | | |

| PURPOSE | IMPORTANCE | ACHIEVEMENT |
|---------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| | (1) extremely important | (1) fully achieved |
| | (2) quite important | (2) partially achieved |
| | (3) somewhat important | (3) not achieved |
| | (4) slightly important | (4) inapplicable |
| | (5) not important | |

| PURPOSE | IMPORTANCE () | ACHIEVEMENT () |
|---|----------------|-----------------|
| 16. to provide treatment for an individual or group | | |

| PURPOSE | IMPORTANCE () | ACHIEVEMENT () |
|---|----------------|-----------------|
| 17. to provide services to help a larger organization | | |

| PURPOSE | IMPORTANCE () | ACHIEVEMENT () |
|---|----------------|-----------------|
| 18. to provide an opportunity for social interaction among the task force members | | |

| PURPOSE | IMPORTANCE () | ACHIEVEMENT () |
|--|----------------|-----------------|
| 19. to provide direction for a larger organization | | |

SECTION C

CHARACTERISTICS AND EFFECTIVENESS

The purpose of this section of the questionnaire is to determine to what degree certain characteristics existed in the PPBES Task Force.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY

- (1) always
- (2) often
- (3) occasionally
- (4) seldom
- (5) never

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

20. Members of the task force were concerned about task accomplishment.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

21. Members of the task force were asked to deal with routine tasks or problems.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

22. Members of the task force were asked to deal with complex tasks or problems.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

23. The guidelines for the task force were clear to the members from the beginning.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

24. The guidelines for the task force were complex and had to be clarified by the members.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

25. The members of the task force tended to set goals for the system that were unrealistic.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY

- (1) always
- (2) often
- (3) occasionally
- (4) seldom
- (5) never

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

26. Decisions were made for the task force by someone outside the task force.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

27. Decisions were made within a prescribed framework by the task force but were usually checked with someone outside the task force before action.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

28. Broad policy decisions were made outside the task force but more specific decisions were made within the task force.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

29. All members of the task force participated in decisions.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

30. Accurate and adequate information was provided for all members of the task force when a decision was to be made.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

31. The decision making process in the task force encouraged teamwork.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

32. The formal goals of the task force were explicitly accepted.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY

- (1) always
- (2) often
- (3) occasionally
- (4) seldom
- (5) never

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

33. The formal goals of the task force were implicitly accepted.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

34. The parent organization provided information for the task force.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

35. Groups and individuals outside the parent organization provided information for the task force.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

36. Information was derived from the expertise of members within the task force.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

37. Too much information was provided for the members of the task force.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

38. Too little information was provided for the members of the task force.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

39. Leadership in the task force was established when the task force was created.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY

- (1) always
- (2) often
- (3) occasionally
- (4) seldom
- (5) never

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

40. Different leaders emerged depending upon conditions in the task force.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

41. Members of the task force, including leaders, had equal status in the task force.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

42. There was a noticeable hierarchy within the task force.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

43. More energy was expended as a member of the task force than in most other working conditions.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

44. Members of the task force were adaptable with respect to change.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY

- (1) always
- (2) often
- (3) occasionally
- (4) seldom
- (5) never

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

45. Members of the task force were flexible and willing to change direction.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

46. Members of the task force had expertise in the area the task force was set up to deal with.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

47. Members of the task force were defensive in the task force setting.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

48. Members of the task force were concerned about job security following completion of the task.

CHARACTERISTIC

FREQUENCY ()

49. Members of the task force were aware of the time limits placed on the project.

SECTION D

ENVIRONMENT

Describe the atmosphere of the PPBES Task Force by circling the appropriate score for the following items.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| 50. Friendly | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Unfriendly |
| 51. Accepting | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Rejecting |
| 52. Satisfying | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Frustrating |
| 53. Enthusiastic | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Unenthusiastic |
| 54. Productive | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Nonproductive |
| 55. Warm | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Cold |
| 56. Cooperative | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Uncooperative |
| 57. Supportive | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Hostile |
| 58. Interesting | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Boring |
| 59. Successful | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Unsuccessful |

SECTION E

SATISFACTION

The purpose of this section is to assess the differences between your work on the task force and other work situations in which you have been involved.

In each of the following ask yourself, "This is how I feel about the statement (1) in permanent hierarchical positions I have held and (2) as a member of the PPBES Task Force. Please answer all questions.

STATEMENT

REACTION

- (1) very dissatisfied
- (2) dissatisfied
- (3) neutral
- (4) satisfied
- (5) very satisfied

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
 60. the chance to do
 something that makes use
 of my abilities.

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
 61. the feeling of
 accomplishment I get
 (got) from the work

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
 62. being able to keep
 busy all the time

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
 63. The chance for
 advancement as a result
 of this work.

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
 64. the chance to play a
 leadership role

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
 65. the way policies are
 put into practice

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
 66. my salary and the
 amount of work I do (did)

STATEMENT

REACTION

- (1) very dissatisfied
- (2) dissatisfied
- (3) neutral
- (4) satisfied
- (5) very satisfied

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
 67. the way my colleagues
 get along with each other

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
 68. the opportunity to
 try my own methods and
 ideas concerning the task

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
 69. the opportunity to
 work alone

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
 70. being able to do
 things that do not go
 against my conscience

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
 71. the credit I get for
 successfully completing a
 task

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
 72. the freedom to use my
 own judgement

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
 73. the way the work
 provides for future
 security

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
 74. the chance to do
 things for other people

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
 75. the opportunity for
 exposure to a demanding
 situation

STATEMENT

REACTION

- (1) very dissatisfied
- (2) dissatisfied
- (3) neutral
- (4) satisfied
- (5) very satisfied

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
76. the way my supervisor
or task force leader
handles those working
with him

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
77. the competence of my
supervisor or task force
leader in making
decisions

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
78. the chance to do
things differently from
time to time

STATEMENT PERMANENT POSITION () TASK FORCE ()
79. the working
conditions

SECTION F

IDEAL TASK FORCES

In your opinion how important are the following characteristics to the process and outcome of an effective task force? Process refers to the procedures of a task force. Outcome refers to the result produced by a task force.

For the purposes of this question please think of an "ideal" task force.

| CHARACTERISTIC | IMPORTANCE | |
|----------------|------------|---------------------|
| | (1) | extremely important |
| | (2) | quite important |
| | (3) | somewhat important |
| | (4) | slightly important |
| | (5) | not important |

| CHARACTERISTIC | PROCESS () | OUTCOME () |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| 80. members concern about task accomplishment | | |
| CHARACTERISTIC | PROCESS () | OUTCOME () |
| 81. clear guidelines | | |
| CHARACTERISTIC | PROCESS () | OUTCOME () |
| 82. definite lines of authority | | |
| CHARACTERISTIC | PROCESS () | OUTCOME () |
| 83. participation in decision making | | |
| CHARACTERISTIC | PROCESS () | OUTCOME () |
| 84. input from a larger system | | |
| CHARACTERISTIC | PROCESS () | OUTCOME () |
| 85. expertise of members | | |

CHARACTERISTIC

IMPORTANCE

- (1) extremely important
- (2) quite important
- (3) somewhat important
- (4) slightly important
- (5) not important

| CHARACTERISTIC | PROCESS () | OUTCOME () |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| 86. human relations skills | | |
| CHARACTERISTIC | PROCESS () | OUTCOME () |
| 87. formal leadership | | |
| CHARACTERISTIC | PROCESS () | OUTCOME () |
| 88. adaptability of membership | | |
| CHARACTERISTIC | PROCESS () | OUTCOME () |
| 89. job security for membership | | |
| CHARACTERISTIC | PROCESS () | OUTCOME () |
| 90. time deadlines | | |
| CHARACTERISTIC | PROCESS () | OUTCOME () |
| 91. formal communication channels | | |

Appendix B

TEMPORARY SYSTEMS INTERVIEW GUIDE

The purpose of this interview is to collect information that will supplement and clarify the data previously collected on the Temporary Systems Questionnaire. As in the case of the questionnaire, this interview deals with the activities and processes of the PPBES Task Force and is not concerned with the specific content of PPBES, nor is it concerned with the implementation phase of the project.

Confidentiality will be maintained.

(The guide provides the general intent of questions to be used in the interviews. Phrasing and ordering of questions will vary if appropriate.)

SECTION B

PURPOSES

The initial objectives of the PPBES Task Force was to fieldtest the program accounting and budgeting portion of PPBES. Would you agree?

Briefly, in operational terms what were the specific purposes of the task force?

How successful was the task force in accomplishing these purposes?

Were you aware of less formal purposes for the task force?

SECTION C

CHARACTERISTICS AND EFFECTIVENESS

How did work on the PPBES Task Force differ from other task forces on which you have worked?

Did these differences have any impact on the success of the PPBES Task Force?

How did work on the PPBES Task Force differ from other work situations in which you have been involved?

Did these differences have any impact on the success of the PPBES Task Force?

PROBES

How did members of the PPBES Task Force communicate with each other? Were the communication patterns helpful in reaching the goals of the task force?

How did the size of the PPBES Task Force effect the achievement of its goals?

Did the mix of people in the PPBES Task Force (eg. sex, age, experience) effect the achievement of its goals?

How did time limits that were placed on the PPBES Task Force effect the achievement of its goals?

Could the project have been performed by a regular hierarchical organization? How effectively?

Did a sense of camaraderie develop among the membership of the task force?

SECTION D

ENVIRONMENT

What pressures or constraints were placed upon the task force and its individual members by outside forces? How did these effect the achievement of the goals of the task force?

PROBES

Technological Conditions - innovative approaches

Legal Conditions - legislation

Political Conditions - interest groups, public figures

Economic Conditions - available resources

Demographic Conditions - members residence

Ecological Conditions -

Cultural Conditions - language, ethnic groups

With what external organizations did the PPBES Task Force have to deal ? What impact did these organizations have on the task force's effectiveness?

What impact did the atmosphere (interpersonal relationships of members) of the task force have on the achievement of the goals of PPBES?

Was job security a concern for members of the task force?

SECTION E

EFFECT ON MEMBERSHIP

What direct effects have you personally experienced as a result of membership in the FPBES Task Force?

PROBES

1. career pattern
2. personal interests
3. professional growth
4. other

What indirect effects have you personally experienced as a result of membership in the FPBES Task Force?

PROBES

1. career pattern
2. personal interests
3. professional growth
4. general lifestyle

SECTION F

EXTENSION

From your experience as a member of the PPBES Task Force and other task forces:

What other possible uses for the task force mode could prove effective or ineffective in education?

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